The Homeric Epics and the Chinese *Book of Songs*

The Homeric Epics and the Chinese *Book of Songs*:

Foundational Texts Compared

Edited by

Fritz-Heiner Mutschler

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Acknowledgments

When I look back on the history of this publication persons and institutions come to mind without whose support the whole enterprise could not have been undertaken, let alone brought to fruition.

My first thanks are owed to Peking University which in 2011, following my retirement in Germany, at the suggestion of my colleague and friend Huang Yang offered me a 'Chair Professorship in the Humanities', attached to the Department of History in the newly founded Center for Western Classical Studies. This allowed me to return to China and to work for five years in inspiring surroundings with interested and intelligent students.

The generous funding of the chair also gave me the opportunity to consider a larger project. A course on the Homeric epics taught to an open-minded Chinese audience reassured me of the feasibility of a long cherished idea: that it would be worthwhile to compare these fountainheads of Western literature and civilization with their Chinese counterpart, the *Book of Songs*, a text corpus of equal literary influence and cultural significance. Yet there was the problem of competence. I am a Latinist rather than a Hellenist, and I am certainly not a professional Sinologist but at best a very amateurish amateur. So there I was with my wonderful idea but without the professional qualification to put it into reality. The salvation came from TV. Always at pains to improve my Chinese – or that was at least the excuse – I had become a regular watcher of Chinese TV serials, through which one can also learn quite a bit about Chinese culture. Thus, inter alia I began to realize that a social institution which has more or less disappeared in Central Europe is still in existence in China, in particular in the countryside. This institution is match-making. And so it occurred to me that I, the German Latinist teaching in Beijing, might serve as matchmaker between Hellenists and Sinologists as well as between Chinese and Western scholars and bring together a range of specialists for a conference on the Homeric epics and the *Shijing*.

With the expert advice of Øivind Andersen, Martin Kern and Achim Mittag I proceeded to recruit a team of highly competent and interested colleagues and thanks to additional financial help from the university's Office of Humanities and Social Sciences, under its director Li Qiang, and to the energetic and efficient organizational support of the Center for

Western Classical Studies, with its director Peng Xiaoyu and its then secretary Hui Hui, the conference finally took place in April 2014. Everyone who participated appeared to enjoy it and – what is more important – to be inspired by the comparative approach.

This positive experience led to the decision to attempt publication: a decision which, as it turned out, was more easily taken than implemented. Thus at several points further encouragement and help was needed – and generously provided by several of the colleagues involved, in particular Douglas Cairns. In Cambridge Scholars Publishing an efficient partner was found for publication. As for linguistic support, throughout the whole process I could count on my friend Helen Wallimann. To Christian Gliwitzky I am very grateful for advice and help concerning the reproductions of the Homer portraits. Achim Mittag, reliable and selfless as his friends know him, assisted me with the indices. At the very end Stephanie Winder was an energetic and committed editor. Hanna Roszkowska-Mutschler, the most precious gift I owe to China, as ever provided invaluable moral support.

Summer 2017 Fritz-Heiner Mutschler

Conventions and Abbreviations

This volume brings together not only very different subject matter but also contributors of very different linguistic affiliations and academic traditions. With regard to language there was no alternative to everybody using the one tongue spoken – to some extent – by all: English. Apart from this, however, the editor felt that he should prescribe no strict adherence to the conventions of a particular scholarly tradition or even his personal preferences. He has aimed at a certain degree of standardization with the use of Pinyin for the transcription of Chinese terms and names and of Latinized forms of Greek names, but otherwise hopes that readers will not be confused by differences in spelling, punctuation (single vs. double quotation marks, comma/full-stop before quotation marks vs. quotation marks before comma/full-stop, shorter vs. longer hyphens), notation (roman vs. italics, with capital letter vs. without capital letter) and form of bibliographical references. Contributors were asked to strive for consistency within their own papers allowing readers to discern the – hopefully – self-explanatory conventions of each.

Concerning the denotation of the texts dealt with in this volume the following remarks should suffice.

Greek works are identified by author and title, usually in their English form: Homer, *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, Aristotle, *Poetics* etc. Abbreviations are used for the following collections of fragments:

DK: Hermann Diels and Walther Kranz (eds.), *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker. Griechisch und Deutsch*, 5th ed., Berlin 1934-7.
FGrHist: Felix Jacoby (ed.), *Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker*, Berlin and Leiden 1923ff.
M-W: Reinhold Merkelbach and Martin L. West (eds.), *Fragmenta Hesiodea*, Oxford 1967 (repr. 1999).
West: Martin L. West (ed.), *Greek Epic Fragments*. Cambridge, MA, and London 2003.

With Chinese authors and works things are slightly more complicated. First, for many classical texts there exists no formal title. In these cases it has become customary to use the author’s name also for the work. To distinguish work from name in alphabetic writing the former is usually italicized. Thus “Mencius” or “Mengzi” refers to the author, "*Mencius*" or "*Mengzi*" to the work. The contributors of this volume follow this convention. Second, for the titles of the Chinese foundation text and its parts different translations are in use, in general and in this volume. The following list should help to prevent confusion:

Shijing: *Book of Songs, Book of Poetry, Classic of Poetry, Poetry, Book of Odes, Odes*[1]
Guofeng: "Airs of the States"[2], "Airs of the Domains", "Airs"
Xiaoya: "Minor Odes", "Lesser Odes", "Minor Elegantiae", "Lesser Elegantiae", "Minor Court Hymns", "Lesser Court Hymns"
Daya: "Major Odes", "Greater Odes", "Major Elegantiae", "Greater Elegantiae", "Major Court Hymns", "Greater Court Hymns"
Song: "Eulogies", "Sacrificial Eulogies", "Hymns", "Dynastic Hymns"

Toleration of these different denotations is one of the exercises in small-scale empathy which we ask of the reader – just as we offer the whole volume as an opportunity to exercise large-scale empathy in coming to grips with two different cultures.

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[1] The situation is further complicated by the fact that there is a second Chinese title: *Shisanbai* which is translated by *The Three Hundred Songs* or *The collection of Three Hundred*.

[2] I follow here the widely spread practice to give the translated title of a part of a work (as opposed to the whole work) in roman with quotation marks.

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INTRODUCTION

Fritz-Heiner MUTSCHLER

The comparison between Greco-Roman antiquity and early China has become an attractive field of research. The reasons for this development are obvious. Both Western and Chinese civilizations can lay claim to outstanding longevity and, with the economic and political rise of China in a world that is still very much under Western influence, both can point to their present state as further proof of their vitality. Thus, for those involved in Classical studies, to engage in the comparative investigation of the formative phases of the two civilizations is only natural; and, in the globalized world in which the mutual understanding of its different parts is more important than ever, their observations may be of interest not only to fellow scholars but to the general public as well.

At the moment, two main strands of research can be distinguished. Concerning the more recent of the two, the impact of the present economic and political situation is particularly plain. After the disintegration of the Soviet empire, the doubtful comportment of the US as – for the time being – the only remaining superpower, and the rise of China to the position of a soon-to-be economic and political giant, intercultural "Empire Studies" have come into fashion, and within this evolving field the comparative analysis of the Roman and the Han empires has gained a certain prominence. Apart from a number of individual studies, three major collections of essays have been dedicated to the discussion of different aspects of the topic: from self-awareness and ideology to political organization and the role of the military, to economy and administration.[1] It can be expected that this line of investigation, which is to a large extent carried out by historians, will develop further in the years to come.

The older and richer strand of research does not concern ancient Rome but ancient Greece and China. It does not deal with political but intellectual history and it has developed in four – partly overlapping – sectors.[2] Given a forerunner like Karl Jaspers,[3] it is not surprising that there are by now a large number of studies that discuss philosophical problems.[4] These studies vary widely in subject matter and approach, but have undoubtedly raised many issues worthy of reflection. Not unrelated to the discussion of philosophical matters is the investigation of the development of science and scientific inquiry in ancient Greece and China, a branch that is above all connected with the name of Geoffrey Lloyd.[5] Third, one finds studies on similarities and differences of mental structures, behavioral patterns, value orientations, and the like. They touch upon issues also dealt with in some of the aforementioned publications but add others and put all of them in a more general perspective.[6] Finally, there is the comparison of literary texts, once again a wide and multicolored field concerning both prose genres like historiography and rhetoric and different kinds of poetry together with poetics.[7]

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[1] Mutschler and Mittag 2008, Scheidel 2009 and 2015.

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[2] I follow here partly the excellent survey article by Tanner 2009. Documenting a recent conference on the topic is Lloyd and Zhao, forthcoming.

[3] See his theory of the transcendental turn of the Axial Age cultures, first proposed in *Vom Ursprung und Ziel der Geschichte*, Munich, 1949. For the renewed topicality of the idea of the Axial Age, see Bellah and Joas 2012.

[4] E.g. Bloom 1981; Graham 1986, 1989; Hall and Ames 1987, 1995, 1998; Harbsmeier 1998; Reding 2004; Yu 2007; Pohl and Wöhrle 2011; Chen, Avramidou, and Nikolakopoulos 2011; Zhao 2014, to give only a few examples. The activities in this field are now manifold, cf. e.g. the most recent conference in Sidney: In Pursuit of Wisdom: Ancient Chinese and Greek Perspectives on Cultivation, January 15-18, 2016.

[5] Lloyd 1990, 1996, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2009, 2015; Lloyd and Sivin 2002. This is only a selection. For a more complete list of the works of the nineties, see the bibliography in Tanner 2009. There are obviously other scholars working in this field, but Lloyd has become the dominant figure.

[6] The classic, though only implicitly comparative, is Granet 1934. Most prolific is F. Jullien, who is a philosopher but whose works deal for the most part with general features of Chinese culture. See Jullien 1991, 1992, 1995, 1997. 2000, 2001, 2010, 2014, inter alia. For a fundamental critique of Jullien's approach, see Billeter 2006. Cf. further Raphals 1992, 2002, 2005, 2013, and Nisbet 2003.

[7] Prusek 1970 (epic, lyric poetry, historiography), Wang 1988 (early poetry), Zhang 1992 (poetics, hermeneutics), Keightley 1993 (early poetry, historiography, art), Mutschler 1997, 2003 (historiography), Lu 1998 (rhetoric), Shankman and Durrant 2000 (early poetry, historiography, philosophy), Cai

The present volume integrates itself into this fourth sector of research. As has been correctly observed, it is here "that one finds the greatest level of experimentation with styles of comparison in Sino-Hellenic studies".[8] One could also say that to find an approach by which a study may lead to results of general significance is still a matter of trial and error.

There are, in particular, three problems that have to be solved felicitously: (a) which texts to compare, (b) which of their aspects to describe and analyze, (c) how, in practice, to organize the comparison. Concerning the first point, the difficulty lies in selecting texts that are representative of the two traditions so that the ascertainment of similarities and differences is meaningful beyond the compared works. With respect to the second point, the challenge consists in finding aspects that are equally significant for texts of both traditions. Regarding the third point, the question is how to bring two independent scholarly disciplines, with their possibly different categories of description and tools of analysis, into a fruitful dialogue. In the case of the present collection of essays and the conference from which it has grown,[9] these problems were approached in the following ways:

For the selection of texts, a look at former studies was of help. For there are two texts, or rather two text corpora, that have attracted attention more frequently than others: the Homeric epics and the *Book of Songs*. David Keightley, in his much discussed essay on the concepts of the hero and heroic action in early Greek and Chinese cultures, based his reflections to a considerable extent on the Homeric epics and the *Book of Songs*.[10] Investigating the role of "Wisdom and Cunning in the Classical Traditions of Greece and China", Lisa Raphals compared, among other texts, Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* with some of the famous novels of the Ming dynasty.[11] In the brief but masterly foreword to the re-edition of Waley's translation of the *Shijing*, Stephen Owen drew on a comparison with the Homeric epics to bring out more clearly

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2002 (poetics, literary criticism), Beecroft 2010 (early poetry, poetics). An assemblage of different topics from all four sections is treated in Shankman and Durrant, 2002.

[8] Tanner 2009, 101.

[9] For this conference, see the Acknowledgements, vii-viii.

[10] Keightley 1993.

[11] Raphals 1992.

the specific character of the *Book of Songs*.[12] François Jullien juxtaposed the *Book of Songs* with the poetological tradition it entailed, and Homeric poetry with the rhetorical and literary criticism it inspired, in order to contrast "allusive incitement" and "mimetic representation" as dominating concepts in Chinese and Western poetics, respectively;[13] while Steven Shankman and Stephen Durrant referred, inter alia, to the *Odyssey* and the *Book of Songs* to illustrate the different relation of "intentionalism" and "participation" in Chinese and Greek literature.[14] And more recently, in A.J. Beecroft's study on "Authorship and Cultural Identity", it was also, on the Chinese side, the *Book of Songs* and its commentarial tradition and, on the Greek side, the Homeric epics and Homeric scholarship together with early lyrical poetry that formed the basis of the investigation.[15]

Thus, even though they were not in each case directly juxtaposed, it is evident that the Homeric epics and the *Book of Songs* are considered to be particularly representative for the Western and the Chinese traditions. Both text corpora clearly qualify as what in recent years has come into the focus of attention under the heading of "cultural texts" or "foundational texts", that is a class of privileged texts "in which a culture finds the valid expression of its worldview and in the communicative representation of which it confirms this worldview and at the same time itself".[16] Given this situation, it seemed timely to compare the two text corpora not only in this or that specific respect together with other texts, but systematically and exclusively, in order to test out how far this kind of direct full-scale comparison could enhance our understanding of their particular characters and perhaps even contribute to a deeper understanding of the cultures to which they belong.

But in what respects should the Homeric epics and the *Book of Songs* be described, what aspects should be analyzed and compared? A number of possibilities have already been pursued in the aforementioned studies. Value-laden elements of subject matter (Keightley's "hero" and "heroic action";[17] Raphals' "wisdom and cunning"[18]), ways of poetic approach

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[12] Owen 1996.

[13] Jullien 1995 (2000), chapters VII and VIII.

[14] Shankman and Durrant 2000, part I.

[15] Beecroft 2010.

[16] Assmann 1994, 80. Concerning "fundierende Texte", see already Assmann 1992, 102f., 128, 266f., 291f., 295.

[17] Keightley 1993.

(Jullien's "allusive incitement" and "mimetic representation"[19]), general attitudes towards the world, i.e. society and nature (Shankman and Durrant's "intentionalism" and "participation"[20]), and culturally determined concepts (Beecroft's "authorship"[21]) have been made the objects of investigation. All these are worthy research topics, but at the same time they are of limited scope. In contrast, the purpose of the envisaged enterprise seemed to be better served by starting on a more fundamental level and looking at the texts from a more general point of view. Accordingly, it was decided that, for the time being, two main subjects should be dealt with: on the one hand, the historic embedding of the texts, on the other hand, their basic poetic features.

In consequence, the present collection of essays is made up of two parts: (I) "The History of the Texts and of their Reception" and (II) "The Texts as Poetry". Each of the two parts is subdivided into three sections. Part I starts out with a section on the "Coming into Being" of the texts. As will be seen, this process is equally complicated and disputed for both the Homeric epics and the *Book of Songs*. But even though absolute certainty will probably never be achieved, it seemed necessary to gain an idea of the possible and most probable scenarios. The final phase of the texts' coming into being is, in both cases, closely connected with what can be called their "Philological Reception", i.e. the efforts of intellectual specialists to secure the constitution and transmission of the texts and to explain them to a broader readership. Accordingly, the development of these activities is the subject of the second section. The third section deals with the overall "Cultural Role" of the texts within their traditions and reviews the thesis that this role was indeed that of "cultural texts" or "foundational texts".

Regarding "The Texts as Poetry", it seemed apposite to concentrate on the basics. Thus, in spite of the fact that the opposition may seem simplistic, the first two sections of Part II are dedicated to "Form and Structure" and "Contents". This admittedly crude differentiation nevertheless allows for descriptions of the works that, though well grounded, are accessible not only to the specialist but also to the interested reader from the "other side". The papers of the last section discuss the "Values" the Ho-

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[18] Raphals 1992.

[19] Jullien 1995.

[20] Shankman and Durrant 2000.

[21] Beecroft 2010.

meric epics and the *Shijing* convey – a topic of particular importance with respect to their role as "foundational" or "cultural" texts.

The decision about the concrete topics to be discussed, however, clarified only one part of the organizational design. In addition, there was the question of how in practice to organize the comparison proper. Here the factual situation of scholarship had to be taken into account. Though things have started to change and will further change in the years to come, the number of people who can be considered specialists of both the Homeric epics and the *Book of Songs* is extremely small. For this reason, the natural approach was to bring specialists from both sides together and initiate exchange and discussion between them. Thus, for each of the six topics, experts on Homer and experts on the *Book of Songs* were asked to present the state of scholarship – from their personal point of view but without the obligation to be original. The intention was to create in each case a direct juxtaposition and thus an implicit comparison of what can be considered shared knowledge on each side.[22] However, in order not to leave it at this level of *implicit* comparison, in addition, colleagues were invited to make the *implicit* comparison *explicit*, i.e. to put the observations made in the two main papers into direct relation to each other. A most welcome and consciously promoted side effect of this organizational scheme was that it led to the cooperation not only of classicists and sinologists but at the same time of scholars from Western countries and from China.

On the whole, it is hoped that the present volume will serve interdisciplinary and intercultural dialogue, and that through the exploratory comparison of Chinese and Western foundational texts it will widen the horizon of readers from either side by opening up their minds to the achievements of a highly important "other culture" and, at the same time, to the particular character of their own.

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[22] As the reader will see, the state of scholarship is not the same for all topics. This means that, in some cases, the papers have to present (and possibly argue for) a specific view which cannot (yet) claim to be generally accepted.

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Part I

The History of the Texts and of Their Reception

A. Coming into Being

1

THE FORMATION OF THE HOMERIC EPICS

Margalit FINKELBERG

Introduction

In the late antique commentary on *The Art of Grammar* of the second-century BCE scholar Dionysius Thrax, we find:

> They say that once upon a time Homer's poems were lost – either in fire or because of the influx of water or as a result of an earthquake. And after the scrolls had been scattered in many directions and become extinct, it turned out that one person happened to keep a hundred Homeric verses, another a thousand, yet another two hundred, and someone else as much as he happened to have. Being in a state such as this, Homer's poetry was about to sink into oblivion. Yet Pisistratus, an Athenian leader, wishing both to acquire fame for himself and to restore the poems of Homer, initiated the following. He announced through the whole of Greece that those who have Homeric verses should bring them to him, a fixed price having been established for each verse. … And after having collected all the verses he summoned seventy-two learned men, in order that each of them should independently assemble the Homeric poems in the way that seems best to him. … And when each of them assembled the poems according to his best judgement, he convened all the said learned men in one place, etc.[1]

This is a late antique resonance of the centuries-long tradition, first attested in the fourth century BCE, about the so-called Pisistratean Recension.[2] According to the tradition in question, the sixth-century

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[1] Schol. Dion. Thrax. *Commentarius Melampodis seu Diomedis* (cod. C), ed. Hilgard, pp. 29-30 = *Scholia Marciana* (VN), ed. Hilgard, p. 316 (my translation). See further Wyrick 2004, 205-20.

[2] For a detailed account of the sources, see Andersen 2011.

BCE Athenian ruler Pisistratus, or (more likely) his son and successor Hipparchus, or even the early sixth-century Athenian statesman Solon, initiated the establishment of the standard text of the Homeric poems for the sake of their performance at the recently introduced Panathenaic festival (see below). As the passage adduced above demonstrates, the story was eventually cast after a widespread narrative pattern designed to account for the standardization of a canonical text; thus, a remarkably similar story concerning the translation of the Hebrew Bible into Greek appears in the so-called *Letter of Aristeas*.[3] Fictional as it certainly is, the story neatly encapsulates two essential points concerning Homer: (a) the canonical status of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* and (b) the important role that sixth-century BCE Athens played in the poems' transmission.

The *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, two epics about the Trojan War, are the earliest literary texts in the Western tradition. The Greeks believed they were authored by Homer, a blind bard who lived in one of the Ionian Greek cities along the Aegean coast of Asia Minor (today, western Turkey) several generations after the events he described. Since the late Archaic period (sixth century BCE), the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* were regularly recited at religious and civic events all over the Greek world, memorized by generations of schoolchildren, and reproduced in numerous copies. Up to the fall of the Byzantine empire (fifteenth century CE), they acted as a cornerstone of Greek education (*paideia*) and a generally recognized hallmark of Greek identity.[4]

A mere outline of the plots of the Homeric epics can hardly reveal their monumental stature. The recital of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* took days, and their printed versions are spread over hundreds of pages. Nevertheless, the plot of each of the poems can be summarized in just a few sentences.

The action of the *Iliad* is set in the tenth year of the Trojan War, whose overall story is taken for granted (see below, on the Epic Cycle). As a result of a quarrel between Agamemnon, the commander-in-chief of the Greek army that has been besieging Troy for ten years, and

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[3] On the narrative patterns employed in the *Letter of Aristeas*, see Honigman 2003, 41-9. While Honigman draws illuminating parallels between this document and the treatment of Homer by the scholars of Hellenistic Alexandria, she makes no use of later sources, such as the scholia on Dionysius Thrax quoted above. On the latter, see esp. Wyrick (above, n. 1).

[4] Finkelberg 2003, 91-6; 2012, 16-20.

Achilles, the best of the Achaean (= Greek) warriors, Achilles withdraws from the battle. The Trojan military leader, Hector, the eldest son of king Priam, uses the absence of Achilles to lead his army out of the city walls in order to attack the Achaean camp. Due to the promise that Zeus gave to Achilles' mother, the sea-goddess Thetis, the Trojans enjoy a temporary success. Hector leads a victorious attack and approaches the Achaean ships. Achilles allows his comrade Patroclus to lead a counter-attack in his stead. After the death of Patroclus at the hands of Hector, Achilles returns to the battlefield, defeats the Trojan army, and kills Hector in single combat.

The *Odyssey* narrative begins ten years after the fall of Troy. Again, the overall story of the Trojan War is taken for granted. The poem tells about the wanderings of Odysseus, one of the Achaean leaders in the war, and his eventual return to his native Ithaca, a small island opposite the northwestern coast of mainland Greece. After having visited many fabulous lands and peoples, and having spent time in the company of goddesses, kings, and monsters, Odysseus comes home in disguise, only to find out that his country is immersed in anarchy and his house occupied by the suitors of his faithful wife Penelope. The suitors destroy Odysseus' wealth, undermine the authority of his young son Telemachus and make plans to assassinate the prince. With the assistance of the goddess Athene, Odysseus and Telemachus kill the suitors. Odysseus reunites with Penelope and restores his authority over Ithaca.

Homer elaborated these relatively simple plots in various ways. He added digressions and secondary episodes, introduced extended descriptions, catalogues, reminiscences, similes, and parables, developed the characters and presented their motives in long speeches. This made the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* into monumental epics and, eventually, into what was aptly defined by Eric Havelock as "the tribal encyclopedia" of ancient Greece. Their origins, however, have remained shrouded in mystery, posing a perpetual challenge to generations of scholars both ancient and modern.

Part 1. Recovering the "True Homer"

From Alexandria to the Mid-Twentieth Century. The inquiry into the text of the Homeric poems started already in the fifth century BCE, and it reached its highest point in the third and second centuries, in

Ptolemaic Alexandria. The Alexandrian scholars saw their task as restoration of the original text of Homer, whom they saw as an individual poet who composed his poems in writing. Zenodotus, Aristophanes, Aristarchus, and other representatives of the Alexandrian school developed methods of textual criticism and analysis, and introduced criteria to judge whether or not a given word, phrase or passage should be considered authentic. They also produced the first scholarly editions of Homer and wrote commentaries on the Homeric poems. The Alexandrian practice of philological inquiry continued through the Roman and Byzantine periods and was given new life in the Renaissance era. Here too, Homer was approached as an individual poet whose manner of composition did not differ essentially from that of Virgil or Ariosto.

A paradigm shift occurred in the eighteenth century, and it was closely associated with the rise of historical method in the humanities. Between *Conjectures académiques ou Dissertation sur l'Iliade* (ca. 1670) by Abbé d'Aubignac (1604-1676), the first to make the claim that Homer the man never existed and the poems ascribed to him were nothing more than collections of primitive lays, and the *Essay on the Original Genius of Homer* (1767) by the British diplomat and traveler Robert Wood (1717-1771), the first to argue that Homer was an oral rather than a literate poet, lies a century that radically transformed the perception of the Homeric epics. This change of attitude found its expression in the writings of Richard Bentley (1662-1742), Giambatista Vico (1688-1744), Christian Gottlob Heyne (1729-1812), Johann Gottfried Herder (1744-1803), and others. But it was not until the appearance of the *Prolegomena ad Homerum* in 1795 by Friedrich August Wolf (1759-1824) that the idea that the poems of Homer are possessed of a special status, not identical to that of literary epics, was articulated as a full-fledged scholarly hypothesis.

Wolf made explicit the view of Homer that had been steadily gaining in popularity in the course of the eighteenth century. He was also the first to make use of the recently published marginal notes (scholia) on Homer, which preserved much of the Alexandrians' textual criticism. Proceeding from Wood's insight regarding an oral Homer, Wolf re-assessed the ancient evidence relating to the poet and his age and stated unequivocally that both Homer and Hesiod "were not writers but singers".[5] Especially significant was his observation that, since the

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[5] Wolf 1985, 92.

Phoenician alphabet was introduced to Greece no earlier than the eighth century BCE, whereas the events described in the Homeric poems could not have taken place later than the eleventh century, the Homeric poems were the outcome of centuries of oral tradition rather than the creation of a single poet.

According to Wolf, the main vehicle of transmission of the early lays out of which the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* grew had been that of memorization.[6] Wolf questioned the unity of the Homeric poems, highly praised by Aristotle in the *Poetics*.[7] He claimed that, in so far as such a unity does exist, it was superimposed on the poems by the editor, or editors, who were thereby responsible for the final form taken by them. Having adopted the tradition of the Pisistratean Recension (above), he placed the textualization of the Homeric poems in the sixth century BCE. Hereafter, the problem of the identity of the author of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* and the time of their composition has become known as the "Homeric Question".

In the course of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth, Homeric scholars found themselves divided into two camps: the Analysts, who followed Wolf in defending the idea of multiple authorship, and the Unitarians, who argued in favor of a single author.[8] While the Analysts dissected Homer's text in the light of numerous contradictions it contained, the Unitarians tried to explain these contradictions away. Over the years, however, the gap between the two camps shrank considerably.[9] Toward the beginning of the twentieth century, the Analysts did not any longer unreservedly deny the compositional unity of the Homeric poems but, rather, focused on the identification of the stages that had led to it. The Unitarians, in their turn, while still proceeding from the idea of a single poet, were now inclined to accept the view that there had been more than one stage in the formation of the Homeric epics.

Both the Analysts and the Unitarians took it for granted that the true history of the Homeric poems and Greek epic poetry in general started with the fixation of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* in writing. All other poetry had been held to appear after Homer and, therefore, to be derivative by definition. This picture began to disintegrate toward the middle of the twentieth century, with the emergence of two trends that have eventually made the pursuits of nineteenth-century Homeric scholarship obsolete.

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[6] Wolf 1985, 108-13.

[7] On this subject, see esp. Latacz 1991.

[8] See further West 2011a and 2011b.

[9] Cf. Dodds 1954, 11-12.

From the Mid-Twentieth Century to the Present: Oral-Formulaic Theory and Neoanalysis. Although developed independently of each other, Oral-Formulaic Theory and Neoanalysis have shown, each in its own way, that the Homeric poems were part of a rich epic tradition, so that it would be historically and methodologically untenable to take them in isolation from their original milieu.[10] More specifically, the oralists' work has made clear that Homer's formulaic diction, and especially the noun-epithet expressions for gods and heroes, cannot be considered the creation of a single poet, whereas the Neoanalysts have demonstrated that in everything concerning the general picture of the Trojan War, the Homeric poems presuppose the tradition that is represented by the poems of the so-called Epic Cycle (see below). It was only a matter of time before these two trends, one predominantly English-speaking, the other predominantly German-speaking, would start fertilizing each other.

In 1984, Wolfgang Kullmann published his "Oral Poetry Theory and Neoanalysis in Homeric Research". In this landmark article, Kullmann wrote about the Cycle poems: "Although these poems are thought to be composed after Homer, neoanalytic scholars think that a great part of their contents had been delivered orally long before the Homeric epics. Their record in writing may be post-Homeric".[11] Kullmann's recognition of the fact that Homer draws on oral tradition signalized a radical shift in the original Neoanalyst position and opened up new perspectives in Homeric scholarship. Since Oral-Formulaic Theory and Neoanalysis, or a combination of the two, play a major part in contemporary Homeric scholarship,[12] it seems worthwhile to dwell on them at some length.

The view of the Homeric poems that is generally held today is that they are representatives of an oral tradition possessed of poetic style and compositional techniques significantly different from those of literary poetry. We owe this awareness to the work of the American

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[10] Finkelberg 2011.

[11] Kullmann 1984, 309.

[12] For a recent assessment, see Montanari et al. 2012.

classicist Milman Parry (1902-1935).[13] Parry proceeded from the observation, first made by Heinrich Düntzer (1813-1901), that for each Homeric idea that is repeated many times, such as the name of a god or hero or the description of a standard action, there is a single fixed expression fitting each main segment of the hexameter verse. These repeated expressions are "formulae". Parry also showed that, alongside the formulae, there is also a great number of the so-called formulaic expressions: these are created by analogy with the formulae and are purported to adapt the fixed formulaic idiom to varying narrative contexts. Furthermore, the Homeric formulae are organized into systems, namely, groups of expressions of varying metrical shape specialized for rendering a given idea under various metrical conditions. The systems are characterized by extension and economy, which allow the poet to express a given typical idea in practically any part of the verse while tending to keep only one formula for each metrical position.

As a result of the comparative study of Homer on the one hand and Apollonius Rhodius and Virgil on the other, Parry showed that, although these later hexameter poets could also employ fixed expressions, the phenomenon of formulaic systems with the economy and extension involved was altogether alien to them. His conclusion was that Homeric poetry is a special kind of poetry. Inspired by Antoine Meillet's reaction to his early work, he speculated that, in so far as the Homeric formulae are the units out of which the epic song is built, the reason why the traditional poets used these fixed expressions was the need to extemporize their songs at the time of performance.

Parry's conclusion thus revived the original hypothesis of Wood and Wolf. As James P. Holoka put it, "Milman Parry's goal had been F. A. Wolf's – to recapture the true mode of existence of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. Wolf had postulated the oral genesis of Homeric poetry; Parry brought home implacably the full implication of oral provenance".[14] As distinct from Wolf, however, Parry maintained that, rather than being transmitted by means of memorization, the Homeric poems were each time created anew out of the stock of traditional expressions at the poet's disposal. To verify this hypothesis, he led an ethnographic expedition into remote parts of the former Yugoslavia, where illiterate singers still performed epic songs before traditional audiences. As a result of this pioneering enterprise, Oral-Formulaic Theory was born.

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[13] See Parry 1971.

[14] Holoka 1991, 462.

The theory reached its highest point in 1960, with the appearance of *The Singer of Tales* by Parry's disciple and collaborator Albert B. Lord (1912-1991). Lord's book, which resulted from field research in the oral tradition that was still alive in the former Yugoslavia, is generally recognized today as the cornerstone of the comparative study of traditional poetry. Lord has shown that the formulae, important as they are, form only one aspect of oral composition, for the poet has also to take care of the narrative aspects of his performance. The oral poet not only produces his phrases out of traditional expressions at his disposal but also relates his stories with the assistance of recurrent themes that spring to his mind whenever a given traditional subject emerges in the narrative. For example, each event of significance is introduced by an assembly, each single combat is preceded by a description of the hero's armor, and so on. Just as the formula is the basic unit of the traditional poet's diction, so also the "theme" is the basic unit of his narrative. By means of the themes, the poet develops the nuclear subjects at his disposal and creates complex and detailed narratives of his own.[15]

Lord also addressed the pivotal question of the fixation of the Homeric poems in writing. It is, indeed, reasonable to suppose that oral poets, who could not write nor even possessed the idea of a fixed text, could hardly have written down their songs themselves or have initiated this enterprise. Who, then, was responsible for the fixation of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* in writing and how did this process proceed? The theory that is largely accepted today is Lord's theory of "oral dictated texts". According to this theory, the poets performed their songs before a scribe who was recording them at the time of performance. Lord demonstrated the particulars of this process by using Southslavic parallels.[16] Parry's studies of Homeric diction and Lord's studies of traditional narrative are generally regarded today as two mutually complementary parts of a single scholarly hypothesis: the Parry-Lord hypothesis of oral-formulaic composition.

Almost immediately upon its appearance, Oral-Formulaic Theory came to occupy a dominant position in Homeric studies, at least in Anglophone scholarship. As distinct from this, the spread of Neoanalysis was rather slow. The initial work, done by J. T. Kakridis, H. Pestalozzi, and W. Schadewaldt in the 1940s and the early 1950s, can hardly account for the current prominence of the trend. The turning point came with the publication of *Die Quellen der Ilias* by Wolfgang Kullmann, which appeared in the same year as Lord's *The Singer of Tales*.[17] While the pioneers of Neoanalysis had mostly focused on the putative influence of the Cyclic *Aethiopis* on the Homeric *Iliad*, Kullmann's comprehensive study opened up the so-called Epic Cycle in its entirety to a new kind of treatment.

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[15] First formulated in Lord 1951.

[16] Lord 1953. See also Janko 1998; Jensen 2011, 281-328; Ready 2015.

The Homeric epics represent only a fraction of the tradition of the Trojan War. The full account of the war was to be found in a group of traditional poems that, taken together, followed its story from the beginning to the end: the *Cypria*, the *Aethiopis*, the *Little Iliad*, the *Sack of Troy*, the *Returns*, and the *Telegony*. They tell the story of a great war triggered by the elopement of Helen, queen of Sparta, by Paris, son of the king of Troy. Warrior kings from all over the Greek world took part in the war, which lasted ten years. Many of them lost their lives at Troy, whereas the survivors dispersed over "the ends of the earth", never to be seen again. The Trojan War put an end to the Race of Heroes, mortal descendants of gods.

At an early stage, it had been taken for granted that all traditional poems about the Trojan War were authored by "Homer". Yet, in the course of time, only the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* came to be regarded as genuinely Homeric whereas the other Trojan epics were attributed to other poets and subsumed into the so-called Epic Cycle. A handful of fragments and a brief summary of the contents excerpted from the *Chrestomathy* of Proclus (second or fifth century CE) are all that remain of the Cycle poems. Only the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* have survived transmission.

It goes without saying that the fragments of the Cycle poems that we have at our disposal are later than the poems of Homer. This does not mean, however, that, as was once supposed, Homer was unaware of their contents. Since the emergence of Neoanalysis, more and more scholars have been ready to entertain the possibility that, in everything concerning the general picture of the Trojan War, the Homeric poems presuppose the tradition represented in the poems of the Cycle rather than vice versa. That is to say, the sources on which Homer drew belonged to a pre-Homeric Trojan tradition of which the poems of the

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[17] On the history of Neoanalysis, see esp. Willcock 1997, Edwards 2011.

Cycle were post-Homeric representatives.[18] Let us try to correlate this conclusion with the historical backgrounds available to us.

Part 2. Homer's Historical Backgrounds

The Homeric amalgam. A mixture of the old and the new is perhaps the most conspicuous feature of Homeric poetry. Homer's language is a prime example. This is a language that no one ever spoke, a *Kunstsprache* formed from a mixture of early and late linguistic features belonging to several distinct idioms.

To begin with, there is a thin layer of the *Attic* dialect. Attic forms emerge in those parts of the text that are considered more recent and less formulaic, first and foremost in speeches and similes. It is generally agreed that the presence of the Attic layer in Homeric diction is due to the fact that Athens was the last stage in the transmission of the Homeric poems that preceded the standardization of their text (more below).

The dominant dialect of Greek epic poetry, however, is *Ionic*. It is evenly represented in every part of Homeric diction, in both speeches and the main narrative, in both the formulaic and the non-formulaic expressions. The Ionic dialect was spoken in Greek settlements in Asia Minor founded by the waves of migration that took place after the collapse of Mycenaean Greece – Ephesus, Miletus, the islands Chios and Samos, and others. The position of the Ionic dialect as the main dialect of Greek epic diction corroborates the ancient tradition of Homer's Ionian origins.

Furthermore, there is also a clearly discernible *Aeolic* layer. It is found in abundance in the formulae, which represent the conservative part of Homer's diction. Aeolic was the dialect of Greek settlements along the northern coast of Asia Minor, including Lesbos and the Troad. Since the Aeolian colonization presumably preceded that of the Ionians, and since the Aeolic forms are much less prominent in the epics, it has been supposed that the Aeolic layer preceded the Ionic one and that the poetic tradition of the Trojan War had moved south from the Aeolic area, the place of the events described, to the area inhabited by the Ionians. The retention of numerous Aeolic forms in the epics, whose principal idiom is Ionic, must have been due to the conservative influence of the meter.[19]

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[18] See Kullmann 1984, 309 (and 20 above). See also Nagy 1990, 72; West 2013, 17.

There is no conclusive evidence that Homer's language preserves linguistic features that belong to the *Mycenaean* dialect as attested in Linear B tablets, but it is reasonable to suppose that the Greek epic tradition originated before the waves of migration to Asia Minor and perhaps even predated Mycenaean Greece. However that may be, the very texture of Homer's language testifies to the fact that its origins should be traced back to much earlier periods than the one to which Homer himself belonged. The same would be true of Homer's picture of warfare, social customs, values, and religious beliefs.[20] In this, as in many other respects, Homer's poetry resembles an archaeological site whose successive strata gradually lead us from the most recent periods to the earliest ones, which lie deep under the surface.

After the 1870s and Heinrich Schliemann's epoch-making excavations at Troy and Mycenae, the Homeric poems were almost unanimously approached as historical documents faithfully depicting Late Bronze Age Greece. Many reconstructions of Mycenaean Greece belonging to this period proceeded from the evidence supplied by the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. This changed dramatically in the middle of the twentieth century. The decipherment of Linear B and the study of the Mycenaean archives uncovered at Knossos and Pylos brought to light a society based on a palace bureaucracy closely resembling those of the Near East. The picture of the society arising from the Homeric poems was sharply at variance with these findings. This conclusion has mainly been due to the work of Moses I. Finley (1912-1986), whose reconstruction of Homeric society opened a new era in the historical study of Homer.[21] In addition, the in-depth investigation of Homeric formulae demonstrated that, contrary to what the pioneers of Oral-Formulaic Theory had supposed, traditional formulaic diction is characterized by a high degree of flexibility and adaptation. As a result, while some of the formulae can indeed be shown to refer to material objects corresponding to Bronze Age artifacts unearthed by the archaeologists, such expressions are heavily outnumbered by more recent ones, describing material objects that belong to later historical periods. This makes it highly unlikely that everything we find in Homer could have arrived untouched from the Bronze Age.

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[19] On the so-called Aeolic phase in Homeric diction, see Haug 2011 (with bibliography); Nagy 2009, II §§275-8.

[20] As convincingly argued in Snodgrass 1974.

[21] Finley 1954 (2nd ed. 1978).

As a result, a new consensus has arisen that places the historical background suitable for Homer in the early first, rather than the late second, millennium BCE. Finley himself located Homeric society in the so-called Dark Age (ca. 1100 – ca. 750 BCE). However, the same argument that has made it impossible to see in the Homeric poems a reflection of Mycenaean Greece also holds good as regards Finley's hypothesis that the poet who presumably lived in the eighth or seventh century BCE could preserve an authentic picture of a society that preceded him by two hundred years. As Ian Morris put it, “Trying to find tenth- and ninth-century societies in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* is just as misguided as looking for the Mycenaeans”.[22] That is to say, to the extent that the Homeric epics allow for reconstruction of a consistent social picture, this picture would rather belong to the time of the poet himself. That is why today the majority of scholars tend to see the Early Archaic Age (ca. 750 – ca. 600 BCE) as providing a more appropriate historical background for Homer, whereas some would place him even later, in the sixth century BCE (see below). This goes well with the new historical, archaeological, and philological assessments concerning the relevance for Homer of such signal characteristics of Archaic Greece as the polis, the open-air temple, hoplite tactics, and more.[23]

Homer and the Archaic Age. Although it is reasonable to suppose that the origins of the Greek epic tradition go back to the aftermath of the Bronze Age, the time of the events that this tradition purported to commemorate, everything points in the direction that it rose to Panhellenic circulation in the eighth century BCE. This was a period of great transformation in the Greek world. The abolishment of kingship and establishment of the new polity of the city-state; the adoption of the self-identification “Hellenes”; the introduction of the new pantheon common to all Greeks; the institution of the Panhellenic cult of Zeus at Olympia; the introduction of the free-standing temple with the cult statue of an Olympian deity within it; the institution of the hero-cult;

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[22] Morris 1986, 127. Cf. Raaflaub 1991, 212.

[23] For an authoritative overview, see van Wees 2011.

the adoption and adaptation of the West Semitic alphabet; the colonization movement – all these occurred simultaneously with the spreading of epic songs about the Trojan War all over the Greek world.

The common denominator of the historical developments that culminated in the great changes of the eighth century BCE was the consolidation of collective identity. It should be taken into account in this connection that, as a result of the population movements that shook the Eastern Mediterranean at the end of the second millennium BCE, the ethnic composition of the population groups that found themselves on the territory of Greece at the beginning of the first millennium was markedly heterogeneous.[24] After the collapse of Mycenaean Greece, large parts of its population had abandoned Greek soil and settled in new places all over the Mediterranean, first and foremost in Asia Minor. Their lands were occupied by population groups that arrived from northern parts of the Balkan Peninsula. Although these newly arrived populations, most (but by no means all) of them of Dorian origin, also spoke Greek, they had taken no part in the Mycenaean civilization. The Dorians were distinguished by their dialect, their division into three tribes (the Ionians had four), and by their political, social, and religious institutions. Upon their arrival, they seized large territories in southern Greece, first and foremost in the Peloponnese, and created the new political entities of Sparta, Argos, and Messenia (later annexed by Sparta).

The newcomers from the north settled side-by-side with what was left of the Mycenaean population. In Argos, the pre-Dorian population formed an additional, fourth, tribe; in Sparta and Crete, it was not allowed to become part of the citizen community and was reduced to serfdom. Yet, by far the largest part of the pre-Dorian population of the Peloponnese fled before the invaders and was concentrated in new areas, most significantly in Attica, which had only been marginally affected by the population movements described above. According to Greek tradition, it is from Athens that the Aegean coast of Asia Minor was subsequently colonized. In historical times, the inhabitants of Attica, Athens included, were still closely related in their language, tradition, and culture to the Ionian settlers of Asia Minor.

The two population groups that inhabited Greece at the beginning of the first millennium BCE differed sharply in their history, traditions, and customs. Yet, the common geographical space and the common language they spoke formed a suitable background for the consolidation of a new collective identity shared by all the inhabitants of Iron Age Greece and the Aegean. Three factors were central to this process. First, the new self-identification "Hellenes" granted a common identity to the entire population of Greece. No less important, the newly established Olympian pantheon united various local deities into a single patriarchal family, presided over by Zeus. The third uniting factor, which also emerged in the eighth century, was the establishment of a generally agreed upon picture of the common past. Regardless of the fact that the newcomers from the north were strangers to Bronze Age Greek civilization, they strove to appropriate its legacy and to make its traditions, still alive and well among the indigenous population, their own. This resulted in the emergence of an image of the past shared by all the inhabitants of Iron Age Greece. Epic poetry became the main vehicle for spreading this new image all over the Greek world.

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[24] See further Finkelberg 2005, 161-76.

The uniting factors mentioned above – common identity, Panhellenic pantheon, common past – were the focus of two poetic traditions that rose to Panhellenic circulation during the same period. While the consolidation of collective identity by means of a Panhellenic genealogy and the establishing of the status of Zeus as the supreme god of the Olympian pantheon were the main subjects of the epic tradition represented by Hesiod, the tradition associated with the name of Homer took these things for granted. The main contribution of the Homeric tradition was the shaping of collective memory. It presented all the constituents of historical Greece as having taken part in a common military enterprise that marked the end of an era – the Trojan War, which had led to the destruction of the Race of Heroes. Thus, despite the late arrival of the northern tribes, mainstream epic tradition made it possible for their descendants to locate themselves on the map of legendary Greece and to appropriate its heroes.

There can be little doubt that the myth of the End of the Race of Heroes purported to commemorate the collapse of Mycenaean Greece. Interestingly, however, the event that brought about this disaster, according to the epic tradition, was not the fall of Mycenae or any other major city of mainland Greece but the ten-year siege of Troy, a non-Greek city on the other side of the Aegean.[25] It goes without saying that, whatever the nature of the events underlying the Trojan saga, they cannot account for the destruction levels and depopulation in mainland Greece or for the massive migration of its population to Asia Minor. Mainstream Greek tradition, as represented by Homer, Hesiod, and the Epic Cycle, chose to replace the momentous events that had brought about the end of Mycenaean civilization with the story of a war against a common enemy fought on foreign soil – a mythological construction that was apparently considered as offering a more satisfactory explanation of the transition of Greece from prehistory to history. The traditional epic poems that referred to these events were effectively marginalized.[26]

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[25] Judging by Hesiod's *Works and Days* (161-3), the epics of the Theban

Homer and pre-Homeric tradition. The above assessment equally applies to all epic poetry about the Trojan War. Yet, Homer's position within this corpus is a special one.[27] Although both the Homeric poems and the poems of the Epic Cycle are engaged in telling the story of the Trojan War, the relationship between them is far from being one of reciprocity. In recent years, scholars who sought to combine Neoanalytic *Quellenforschung* with the theory of oral composition have become aware of the fact that Homer uses the tradition represented in the poems of the Trojan Cycle in a rather idiosyncratic way. By means of subtle strategies of inclusion and exclusion, he does not just evoke the Cycle tradition or borrow its motifs but, rather, deliberately reshapes it, making it serve his own agenda. This strongly suggests that the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* aspired to absorb the tradition that preceded them and, eventually, to supersede it.[28] This is best demonstrated by Homer's use of the myth about the End of the Race of Heroes.

According to the Cyclic *Cypria*, Hesiod's *Works and Days*, and the *Catalogue of Women* (a genealogical poem belonging to the Hesiodic

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Cycle can be seen as an attempt at presenting the End of the Race of Heroes as having issued from a war fought on Greek soil. This tendency, however, was marginalized by Homer and the Trojan tradition. For the Theban Cycle, see West 2003, 38-63.

[26] See e.g. the lost *Aigimios* and *Melampodia,* which dealt with the coming of the Dorians and the migrations to the East, respectively; for the fragments, see Hes. frr. 270-9, 294-302 M-W. The same may also be true of the Theban Cycle, see the previous note.

[27] Finkelberg 2011, 2015.

[28] See further Finkelberg 2015 (with bibliography).

tradition), the Trojan War was initiated by Zeus and other gods in order to put an end to the Race of Heroes.[29] The overall design of the Epic Cycle, which starts with the plan of Zeus to destroy the Race of Heroes and ends with the death of the last of them, Odysseus, conveys the same idea. The remarkable thing, however, is that the theme of the End of the Race of Heroes is practically ignored in Homer. It is true that "the plan of Zeus", the notorious Dios Boulê referred to in the proem of the *Iliad* (1.5), is strongly reminiscent of the same expression in the proem of the Cyclic *Cypria* referring to Zeus' plan to annihilate the Race of Heroes; however, this theme is irrelevant to the rest of the *Iliad* to such a degree that the scholarly consensus since Aristarchus has been almost unanimous in taking the *Iliad* expression as standing for the promise that Zeus gives to Thetis later in the same book. It is also true that the passage in *Iliad* 12 referring to the future destruction of the Achaean wall by Poseidon and Apollo, with its unique expression "the race of demigods" (12.23 ἡμιθέων γένος ἀνδρῶν), may well have evoked the End of the Race of Heroes; yet, the same passage states unequivocally that, after the end of the war, those of the Achaeans who stayed alive simply and prosaically went home (12.14,16). Again, Proteus' prophecy in *Odyssey* 4, according to which Menelaus will be taken after his death to the Elysian Fields (4.561-5), evokes the Isles of the Blessed, the final abode of the Heroes in Hesiod; yet, when taken against the general background of the Homeric epics, whose people die ordinary deaths, Menelaus' fate is rather the exception that proves the rule.[30]

We are thus facing a paradox: despite the central position that the myth of the End of the Race of Heroes assumes in Hesiod and the Cycle, it plays no significant role in either the *Iliad* or the *Odyssey*.[31] Homer's close acquaintance with the main Cycle subjects, as shown by the Neoanalysts, makes it very unlikely that he could have been unaware of the central myth of the Greek heroic tradition. Accordingly, his failure to integrate this myth into his own picture of the Trojan War can only be interpreted as due to deliberate suppression.

In Hesiod, the destruction of the Race of Heroes is part of a larger teleological scheme according to which the history of mankind is a process of gradual degeneration from the Race of Gold, which flourished at the dawn of humanity, to the Race of Iron, which stands for man's present condition. Needless to say, such an attitude to the past implies a distinctly negative view of the present, and Hesiod's unflattering characterization of the Race of Iron effectively drives this message home.[32] But the same attitude can also be discerned in both the *Catalogue of Women*, which concludes the description of the End of the Race of Heroes with dark prophecies about the future, and the Cyclic *Cypria*, whose poet presents Helen, the cause of the Trojan War, as the daughter of Nemesis.[33] Conversely, Homer's suppression of the End of the Race of Heroes establishes continuity between Greece of the Heroic Age and historical Greece, thus reversing the pessimistic view of the present that is characteristic of other traditional poetry.[34] Even if the people of the past were, as is often acknowledged by Homer, bigger and stronger than "us", from then on Homer's Achilles and the Spartan general Brasidas, Homer's Nestor and the Athenian statesman Pericles could be mentioned in the same breath (e.g. Plato's *Symposium* 221c), simply because they were seen as existing within the same historical space. Clearly, this would not be possible had the Race of Heroes continued to be envisaged, as in Hesiod and the Cycle, as an extinct race having nothing in common with the degenerate people of the present.

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[29] *Cypria* fr. 1 West; Hes. *Works and Days* 159-73; [Hes.] fr. 204. 95-105 M-W.

[30] Cf. Griffin 1980, 167; S. West in Heubeck et al. 1988, 227.

[31] Finkelberg 2004.

This move is closely connected with Homer's failure to mention another subject that is ubiquitous in other epic poetry, that of the Heroes' posthumous immortalization. In Hesiod and the Cycle, immortalization seems to be the norm. Thus, in the *Works and Days* (167-73), the Heroes find their final abode on the Isles of the Blessed, where they enjoy a happy life; in the Cyclic *Aethiopis* (arg. 2, 4 West), Achilles is taken after his death to the miraculous White Island whereas his opponent Memnon is rendered immortal by his goddess mother; in the Cyclic *Telegony* (arg. 4 West), Telemachus and Penelope are led to the island of Circe where they are eventually immortalized.[35] Again, this contrasts sharply with what we find in Homer, whose people invariably die ordinary deaths (on the special case of Menelaus see above, with n. 30). As Laura Slatkin put it, the theme of immortality is transformed in Homer into one of "heroic experience as a metaphor for the condition of mortality, with all its contradictions".[36]

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[32] *Works and Days* 174-8: "Would that I were not among the fifth men, but either dead earlier or born later! For now it is a race of iron; and they will never cease from toil and misery by day or night, in constant distress, and the gods will give them harsh troubles". Tr. M. L. West.

[33] [Hes.] fr. 204.102-17 M-W; *Cypria* frr. 10.2, 11 West.

[34] Cf. Scodel 1982, 35: "In Homer, the continuity of history from the heroes to the poet's contemporaries is complete".

The third important theme that is prominent in Hesiod and the Cycle but is practically ignored by Homer is that of the Heroes' post-war migrations. The migrations were the central subject of a sub-genre of heroic poetry conventionally called *nostoi*, and both the Hesiodic tradition and the poems of the Cycle abound with the stories of the Heroes' diffusion over the Mediterranean.[37] Again, nothing of this is found in Homer. Nestor's reminiscences in *Odyssey* 3 are especially illuminating in this respect. In Nestor's account, all the survivors of the war returned to their homes: Diomedes' ships safely landed in Argos from where they had departed at the beginning of the war; the northerners Neoptolemus and Philoctetes also had a safe journey back home; finally, Idomeneus brought all his men back to Crete.[38] Yet, the evidence stemming from non-Homeric accounts suggests a quite different picture. Diomedes left Argos and went to the Adriatic where he became the founder of numerous cities; Neoptolemus traveled by land to Epirus, where he became the founder of the royal dynasty of the Molossians; Philoctetes migrated to the region of Croton in Italy where he colonized Cape Crimissa; Idomeneus was expelled from Crete by his wife and her new consort, and so on.[39]

But probably the most telling case is that of Odysseus. It is difficult to avoid the impression that the fabulous lands where Odysseus is tempted to stay for the rest of his life – the islands of Calypso and Circe, the lands of the Phaeacians and the Lotus-Eaters – are variations on the theme of the "Isles of the Blessed" at "the ends of the earth", the happy abode of the Heroes in Hesiod and the Cycle. Yet, all these temptations, including immortality itself, are emphatically rejected by the *Odyssey*'s protagonist.

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[35] Cf. also [Hes.] fr. 204.99-103. See further Griffin 1977, 42-3.

[36] Slatkin 1991, 39.

[37] See Malkin 1998; cf. Finkelberg 2005, 149-50.

[38] Diomedes: *Od*. 3.180-2, cf. *Returns* arg. 1 West; Neoptolemus: *Od*. 3.188-9, cf. 4.5-9; Philoctetes: 3.190; Idomeneus: 3.191.

[39] Diomedes: Apollod. *Epit*. 6.9-10, cf. Virg. *Aen*. 11.243-95; Neoptolemus: *Returns* arg. 4 West, Pind. *Nem*. 7, Eur. *Andr*. 1243-51, Apollod. *Epit*. 6.12-13; Philoctetes: Ps.-Arist. *Mir*. *Ausc*. 840a15-26; Apollod. *Epit*. 6.15b; Idomeneus: Apollod. *Epit*. 6.9. On the partiality of Nestor's account of the homecomings of Diomedes, Neoptolemus, and Idomeneus, see also Marks 2008, 127-9. On a similar discrepancy concerning the figure of the prophet Calchas, see Finkelberg 2011, 203-6.

Continuity with the heroic past rather than historical discontinuity; the Heroes' humanization through mortality rather than their posthumous immortalization; Greece as the Heroes' only destination rather than their migrations to foreign lands – these are, then, the main revisions undergone by the tradition of the End of the Race of Heroes in the hands of Homer. When taken together, it transpires that these revisions are aspects of one and the same project, whose objective was not so much a glorification of the past as, rather, the establishment of usable ideological foundations for the present and the future.

We should, therefore, speak of two stages in the Greek epic tradition, one represented by the poems of the Cycle, the other by the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.[40] The evidence of vase painting corroborates this conclusion. In recent decades, it has been demonstrated beyond doubt that while images evoking poems of the Epic Cycle started to appear on the vases from the eighth century BCE, clearly recognizable Homeric subjects are not represented until the late seventh century.[41] This strongly suggests that the circulation of traditional prototypes of the Cycle poems preceded the circulation of the poems of Homer. This is also one of the reasons why many scholars today place Homer in the second half of the seventh century BCE rather than, as was assumed earlier, in the second half of the eighth century.

As far as I can see, the Cycle's emphasis on historical discontinuity, the deterioration of mankind, and migrations suggests the period that immediately followed the collapse of Mycenaean Greece. This vision was taken into the early Archaic Age, when the consolidation of the new Greek civilization, addressed in the previous section, took place, and was adapted to its needs. The adaptation, however, was far from complete. The discontinuity with the past and a markedly pessimistic view of the present, inbuilt in the myth of the End of the Race of Heroes, disagreed with the projection of the Panhellenic idea into the heroic past and the positive self-image that the new Greek civilization aspired to communicate. An adjustment was required, and it was supplied by the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. On this interpretation, Homer's revision of the earlier epic tradition must have been Late Archaic. By abandoning the myth of the End of the Race of Heroes, as well as such corollaries of it as the Heroes' posthumous immortalization and their migrations to remote lands, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* reversed the negative historical perspective of the earlier tradition and provided Greek civilization with a new foundational myth that sustained its validity until the end of antiquity.

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[40] Similarly, Nagy 1990, 73, accounts for Homer's relationship with the Cycle by arguing that "the Panhellenization of the Homeric tradition entailed a differentiation from older layers of Panhellenic epic tradition".

[41] On this subject, see esp. Burgess 2001, 35-44, 53-114.

Coming into being: possible scenarios. While some scholars place the standardization of the Homeric poems in Ionia of the eighth or seventh century BCE, others associate it with sixth-century Athens.[42] Contrary to the widespread view, the two hypotheses are not necessarily mutually exclusive. As the studies of Barbara Graziosi, Douglas Frame and Gregory Nagy have shown, the Panathenaic performance of Homer, apparently introduced in 522 BCE on the initiative of the Pisistratid Hipparchus (see above), was a legitimate successor of earlier performances at Panionian festivals, such as those at Mycale in Asia Minor or at Delos.[43] We cannot, of course, be sure that the "Homer" performed at these festivals amounted to the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* rather than to the poems of the Trojan Cycle, but if it did, then the revision of the heroic tradition as outlined above should have taken place in Late Archaic Ionia. Furthermore, if the Homeric poems had indeed been fixed in writing already at this stage, then the Panathenaic text of Homer could hardly be much more than, so to speak, an "Athenian edition" of the already existing Ionian epics.[44]

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[42] Among contemporary scholars, the most prominent advocate of the latter is Minna Skafte Jensen, see Jensen, 1980; 2011.

[43] Graziosi 2002; Frame 2009; Nagy 2009. Furthermore, it is reasonable to suppose that the Panionian festivals were, in turn, preceded (as well as paralleled) by public performances of the Trojan epics in Aeolian regions of Asia Minor, such as Lesbos and the Troad. On Panaeolian performances of Homer, see especially Nagy 2009, II §§272-3; on the Aeolic stage in the history of Homeric diction, see above, with n. 19.

[44] As Frame 2009, 583-4, points out, the Homeric poems must have reached Athens, an Ionian city, "almost immediately after they took root on Chios".

If, on the other hand, it is sixth-century BCE Athens that is considered the birthplace of the Homeric poems as we know them, then only the first stage of the Trojan tradition, the one represented by the Cycle poems, should be associated with Ionia. In this scenario, the revision of the Cycle tradition as found in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* should be attributed to the Ionian bard(s) commissioned to produce the Panathenaic text of Homer. It should be noted in this connection that, while both the nostalgic stance inherent in the myth of the End of the Race of Heroes and its emphasis on migrations may well point in the direction of the descendants of Mycenaean refugees settled in Asia Minor at the beginning of the first millennium BCE, the opposite tendencies characteristic of the *Iliad* and, especially, the *Odyssey*[45] would go very well indeed with the mainland cultural milieu and the Panhellenic aspirations of sixth-century Athens.

Whether the standardization of the text of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* under Hipparchus was the primary or the secondary one, there is little room for doubt that the Panathenaic text played a pivotal role in the subsequent transmission of the Homeric poems. It is important to keep in mind in this connection that, upon the conquest of Asia Minor by the Persians, Athens was rapidly gaining the status of the religious, political, and cultural center of the Ionian lands. As Nagy has pointed out, it is within this historical context that the Athenian appropriation of Homer should be approached.[46] Yet, the ambitions of the Athenian state reached far beyond the Panionian arena. Athens aspired to gain Panhellenic supremacy, and its cultural politics was instrumental in achieving this goal.

The appropriation of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* granted the Athenian state a monopoly over what was quickly recognized by all as the standard text of Homer. The rhapsodes, professional performers of the Homeric epics, recited the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* not only at the Panathenaic festival, which rapidly gained Panhellenic status, but also all over Greece.[47] The *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* became the focus of school education and of scholarly, philosophical, and theological hermeneutics, to be studied by schoolchildren and commented upon by intellectuals all over the Greek-speaking world.[48] This is why the history of the Homeric poems is not just the history of a literary text but that of a literary text highly privileged in the civilization to which it belonged.[49]

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[45] Cf. Cook 1995.

[46] See esp. Nagy 2009, I §50, on “the new Panionianism of the Peisistratidai of Athens” as triggered by the Persian occupation of old Ionian centers.

[47] Including Dorian Sparta but apparently excluding Dorian Crete, see Plato *Laws* 680c. On the rhapsodes, see West 2011c.

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[48] See the contributions of Barbara Graziosi and Glenn Most.

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2

THE FORMATION OF THE *CLASSIC OF POETRY*

Martin KERN

1. The Formation of the Early Anthology

The *Classic of Poetry* (*Shijing*) is the fountainhead of the Chinese poetic tradition. The individual parts of the book likely date from different times over the eight-hundred-year span of the Western Zhou (ca. 1046-771 BCE), Springs and Autumns (770-453 BCE), and Warring States (453-221 BCE) periods. According to Sima Qian's (ca. 145-ca. 85 BCE) *Records of the Archivist* (*Shiji*), the *Poetry* was compiled by Kongzi ("Master Kong," i.e., Confucius; 551-479 BCE) in the early fifth century BCE. The authors of the poems themselves are not known. Since antiquity also called *The Three Hundred Poems*, the text has been transmitted in the form of the *Mao Poetry* (*Maoshi*), one of the four Han dynasty (202 BCE-220 CE) exegetical traditions of the anthology that were canonized and taught at the Han imperial academy. The *Mao Poetry* is divided into four sections, comprising 160 "Airs of the States" (*Guofeng*), 74 "Minor Court Hymns" (*Xiaoya*), 31 "Major Court Hymns" (*Daya*), and 40 "Eulogies" (*Song*). Recently excavated manuscripts suggest that this division existed already by the fourth century BCE. The *Records of the Archivist* includes the following passage in its Kongzi biography:

> In antiquity, there were more than three thousand poems. When it came to Kongzi, he removed their duplicates and chose [only] what could be matched to the principles of ritual. Above [in time] he selected [poetry from the founding ancestors of the Shang and Zhou dynasties] Xie and Lord Millet, and in the middle he transmitted [poetry from] the flourishing [time of the] Yin and Zhou. Coming to the shortcomings of [the Zhou] Kings You and Li, those had begun with [the affairs of] the sleeping mat … Kongzi put all the three hundred and five poems to the [zither] strings and singing, seeking to harmonize the tunes of [the an-

> cient dances] “Shao” and “Wu,” and the “Court Hymns” and “Sacrificial Eulogies.” From here on, ritual and music were obtained and could be transmitted in order to accomplish the Royal Way and to complete the Six Arts.[1]

The *Records* speaks of the *Poetry* as a unified and universally shared text organized by Kongzi; it does not yet speak of that text’s subsequent lineages of transmission or interpretation. The “Monograph on Arts and Writings” in Ban Gu’s (32-92) late first-century CE *History of the Han* (*Hanshu*) takes the history of the *Poetry* into the early empire:

> The *Classic of Documents* states: “Poetry expresses intent, song makes words last long.” Thus, when the heart-mind is stirred by grief or joy, the melodies of singing and chanting issue forth. To recite words is called poetry, to chant melodies is called song. Thus, in antiquity there were officials to collect poetry, allowing the ruler to comprehend local customs, understand [his own] accomplishments and failures, and examine and rectify himself. When Kongzi committed himself to gather the poetry of the Zhou [dynasty], upwards [in time] he selected from Yin [i.e., the Shang dynasty], downwards he collected from [his home state of] Lu, [assembling] altogether three hundred and five pieces. The reason why [the anthology remained] complete after meeting with [the disaster of the] Qin [bibliocaust] was that it had been recited [from memory] and had not merely been [written] on bamboo and silk. When the Han [dynasty] arose, Lord Shen of Lu made individual character glosses on the poems, and Yuangu of Qi and Mr. Hán of Yan both made commentaries. Some [others] drew on the *Springs and Autumns Annals* and collected miscellaneous explanations but entirely missed the basic principles [of the poems]. Compared to these failures, the Lu [commentarial tradition] comes closest. The three [Han dynasty] intellectual lineages [of *Poetry* exegesis, i.e., Lu, Qi, and Hán] were all arrayed [for study] in the imperial academy. In addition there was the learning of Lord Mao who claimed for himself the commentarial tradition of [Kongzi’s disciple] Zixia. Prince Xian of Hejian was fond of [the Mao commentary], but it did not become established [at the Han imperial academy].[2]

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[1] *Shiji* 47: 1934.

[2] *Hanshu* 30: 1708. While the Lu, Qi, and Hán versions of the *Poetry* had been taught at the imperial academy since the second century BCE, the *Mao Poetry* was accorded such status only under the nominal reign of the infant Emperor Ping (r. 1 BCE-6 CE). By the end of the second century CE, the *Mao*

The two passages translated here are the earliest systematic accounts of the *Poetry*. Both date from the early empire, that is, centuries after Kongzi's lifetime (and following the Qin imperial unification of 221 BCE). Both are centered on the role of Kongzi not as the author but as the compiler of the anthology; and neither account indicates how the poems had come into being in the first place, or who had authored any of them.

This picture is consistent with how the *Poetry* is mentioned or quoted across pre-imperial and early imperial sources, including a range of recently unearthed manuscripts on bamboo and silk dating from ca. 300 through 165 BCE.[3] In both the manuscripts and the transmitted literature of early China, no text from antiquity is more frequently invoked than the *Poetry*, and no text is more intimately related to Kongzi (whose mention, in turn, far outnumbers that of any other philosopher in early Chinese texts). The *Poetry* stands at the core of the early Chinese textual tradition and cultural imagination. As the Master pronounces in the *Analects* (*Lunyu*), the three hundred poems can be "covered in one phrase: no wayward thoughts!" (*Analects* 2.2); with them, "one can inspire, observe, unite, and express resentment" as well as learn "in great numbers the names of fish, birds, beasts, plants, and trees" (17.9), while those who fail to study them "have nothing to express themselves with" (16.13) and are like a man who "stands with his face straight to the wall" (17.10). Moreover, if one can recite the three hundred poems but is unable to apply them to the practice of governing or to diplomatic speech when abroad, "what use is there for them?" (13.5). In two bamboo manuscripts from Guodian, the *Poetry*

Poetry was rapidly rising to dominance while the "three lineages" (Lu, Qi, Hán) began to fade away from the canon of classical learning, even though some of their readings remained relevant, visible in quotations and allusions, in the later literary tradition; see Wang Zuomin 2005; Tanaka 2003; Kern 2007.

[3] Primarily the "Five Modes of Conduct" ("Wu xing") and "Black Robes" ("Zi yi") bamboo texts from Guodian tomb No. 1 (Jingmen, Hubei province; ca. 300 BCE), the "Five Modes of Conduct" silk manuscript from Mawangdui tomb No. 3 (Changsha, Hunan; before 168 BCE), the fragmentary *Poetry* anthology on bamboo from Shuanggudui tomb No. 1 (Fuyang, Anhui; before 165 BCE), and the "Black Robes" and "Kongzi's Discussion of the *Poetry*" ("Kongzi shilun") bamboo manuscripts purchased by the Shanghai Museum on the Hong Kong antiquities market. See Kern 2005.

is listed as part of the classical curriculum of the "Six Arts" (*liu yi*)—also mentioned by Sima Qian—and hence grouped together with the *Documents* (*Shu*), the *Rituals* (*Li*), the *Music* (*Yue*), the *Changes* (*Yi*), and the *Springs and Autumns Annals* (*Chunqiu*).[4] In the *Mozi* (*Master Mo*), we even have an early (fourth century BCE?) voice ridiculing the classicist followers of Kongzi for being consumed with singing, dancing, and putting to music the three hundred songs.[5]

By the late fourth century BCE, and possibly for quite some time before that, the *Poetry* was not an isolated body of literature but part of the larger set of moral, pedagogical, ritual, and socio-political precepts and practices of the "Six Arts" that had gained currency across the Chinese cultural realm. While the *Poetry* is associated with the Zhou heartland in the north, with the "Airs of the States" attributed to fifteen states or regions stretching in an East-West corridor along the Yellow River from modern Shandong to Shaanxi, the ancient manuscripts that quote them all come from southern central China. The quotation patterns in these manuscripts reveal that while the writing of the poems was not yet standardized even by the mid-second century BCE, the anthology had been largely stable in its content and possibly even wording by around 300 BCE.[6] Despite what must have been considerable differences in dialect across the vast early Chinese *oikouménē*, the manuscript quotations from the *Poetry* are phonologically (if not, indeed, phonetically) consistent with their counterparts in the received anthology, suggesting a spoken élite koiné in which the poems were preserved and which, in turn, was embodied and perpetuated in canonical verse. The existence of this idiom is attested in *Analects* 7.18 where Kongzi is said to have used "elegant standard speech" (*yayan*) for the *Poetry*, the *Documents*, and matters of ritual.

To Han thinkers, writing from the perspective of the unified empire, the ultimate audience of the *Poetry* had been the Zhou king himself: as poetry was believed to emerge as a quasi-cosmological event, naturally and inevitably expressing the speaker's emotional response to personal experience, it was taken to reflect the moral and political order of its time. Furthermore, it represented the voice of the common people—an unmanipulated voice of truth that, collected by court officials, rose upward to the ruler to remind him of his duties and failures. With the Qin-Han empire, the notion of poetry as socio-political symptom and omen generated an exegetical tradition that turned decidedly historical, satisfying the need for a moral and political teleology that gave order and explanation to a chaotic past and, ultimately, to the rise of the empire itself. Grasping the meaning of a poem would yield an understanding of specific historical events, turning poetry into “history told in verse.”[7]

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[4] Jingmen shi bowuguan 1998, 179 ("Xing zi ming chu"), 188 ("Liu de"); further 194-5 ("Yucong").

[5] *Mozi xiangu* 2001, 48.456.

[6] Kern 2003, 33-7; and Kern 2005.

Yet, on the other hand, it was also acknowledged that poetry did not speak in any direct, literal way and hence was not to be taken at its surface meaning. It was so wide open to mutually exclusive interpretations that it caused rivaling exegetical lineages to emerge. In the early empire, these traditions of teaching and interpreting the *Poetry* often advanced fundamental differences in understanding an individual poem. Nevertheless, they all agreed on the principal function of poetry as a source of historical knowledge and moral edification; and they further concurred in their general disinterest in individual authorship, poetic beauty, linguistic differences, and the possible circulation of poetry beyond the realms of the political élite.

The nature of the *Poetry* as a diverse anthology of different kinds of poetry (likely dating from different times) suggests that it was a selection from a larger body of material—regardless of their actual or imagined number, or of the persona of their collector and compiler. The only figure who in Warring States and early imperial times is consistently associated with the *Poetry*, and who is granted unquestionable authority over the text, is indeed Kongzi. This association of the ideal text with the ideal sage elevated the *Poetry* to a book of wisdom that gave account of history as much as it did of the human condition, that spoke of the ambitions of kings, of the plight of farmers and soldiers, and of the anxieties of lovers; it was, to borrow Stephen Owen’s characterization, “the classic of the human heart and the human mind”[8] and as such was attributed to the exemplary sage. To the early tradition, it was only in the mirror of Kongzi’s unique perspicacity and unimpeachable moral perfection that the *Poetry* became fully visible. Moreover, it was only with its idealized compiler that the *Poetry* as a body of text came into being, not as his words or the words of his time, but as a repository of expressions inherited from the past. After Kongzi, and especially with the Han imperial scholars, it was an artifact of *the past remembered*—a canonical curriculum that enshrined all at once the poems, the course of history they marked and revealed, and their sagely compiler and transmitter.

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[7] Riegel 1997, 171.

[8] Owen 1996, xv.

Yet, the heavy burden placed on the cultural and historical meaning of the *Poetry* reveals an acute problem: while, in general, the *Poetry* is believed to contain earlier and later layers of text, with the earliest poems possibly dating from the eleventh and tenth centuries BCE, the textual record up to the Han anthology is extremely fragmentary. In the *Mao Poetry*, the longest poem, "The Closed Temple" (Mao 300 "Bi gong"), contains 492 characters, and several others are nearly as extensive. However, the longest quotation of any poem in any early text outside the anthology itself contains merely forty-eight characters: one of eight stanzas of "Great indeed!" (Mao 241 "Huang yi") as quoted in the *Zuo Tradition* (*Zuozhuan*), the grand pre-imperial work of historiography probably dating from the fourth century BCE.[9] The only quotation of an entire poem is of "Grand Heaven Had Its Accomplished Mandate" (Mao 271 "Haotian you cheng ming"), a text of merely 30 characters quoted in *The Conversations of the States* (*Guoyu*), another work of early historiography possibly contemporaneous with the *Zuo Tradition*.[10] Otherwise, the standard quotation pattern comprises a single line, a couplet, or a quatrain. While early quotations from the *Poetry* number in the hundreds, they do not let us reconstruct longer poems; often, they show a preference for particular phrases that are quoted repeatedly across various sources while other verses and entire stanzas are not quoted even once. Altogether, the presence of the individual poems in the overall textual record of early China is very uneven. This disquieting situation may explain to some extent the urgency felt by Han commentators to supply each piece in the *Poetry* with a historical context: not *extracted from* the poems—as claimed by way of the notion that "poetry expresses intent"—but rather *injected into* them.

We therefore do not know the original forms of the poems: did they have as many stanzas as we see in the Han anthology, or are the longest poems composite texts from various sources? Were they nearly as regular in their formal features? Did some of the very short poems ever exist as individual texts before being anthologized as such? Was the internal order of stanzas and lines stable? Recognizing the numerous possibilities of retrospective editorial intervention—archaizing recomposition, formal standardization, creative compilation of disparate textual material, acts of textual combination, division, and selection—before the poems were finally arrested within the framework of their canonical anthology, it becomes exceedingly difficult to define which parts are “early” and which others “late.” Any particular poem that might appear “early” may well be a much later artifact of commemoration and imagination. Considerable evidence suggests that some of the “early” poems are composite artifacts formed from different types and chronological strata of text.[11]

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[9] Yang Bojun 1992, 1495 (Zhao 28); Legge 1985, 727.

[10] *Guoyu* 3.4 ("Zhou yu, xia"); Xu Yuanhao 2002, 103.

2. Sacrificial Eulogies

In general terms, Chinese poetry began to take shape in the early religious and political rituals of the Western Zhou (ca. 1046-771 BCE) royal court, including the ancestral sacrifice, banquets, and proclamations. The presumably earliest examples of poetry—especially the “Eulogies of Zhou” (“Zhou song”)—are believed to come from the early decades of the Western Zhou dynasty.

The thirty-one anonymous “Eulogies of Zhou” differ from the “Major” and “Minor Court Hymns” in both their brevity and overall lack of the two principal features of formal regularity in early Chinese poetry: rhyme and meter. As such, they appear as particularly archaic forms of Zhou verse employed within sacrificial ceremonies to commemorate and feast the dynastic ancestors. While semanticizing and interpreting the sacrificial act through words of commemoration and religious expectation, poetry, always as song, was integrated into the performance of dance and music. Judging from its linguistic properties as well as from the available historical accounts, this poetry existed in the context of and for the purpose of synesthetic religious ceremonies.[12] Fundamentally non-lyrical, non-self-expressive, and non-authored, it embodies the political and religious community of the Zhou royal court, giving voice to the reciprocal relationship between the living king and the powerful spirits of his ancestors.

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[11] For a decidedly more optimistic approach to the origins of Zhou poetry and music, based on considerable speculative risks I do not feel confident to take on myself, see Chen 2007. An admirably detailed study of the *Poetry* in pre-imperial times, albeit traditional in its thoroughly positivistic bent, is Ma Yinqin 2006. For one of many earlier interpretations of the origins of the *Poetry* as ritualistic, see Chen 1974.

Not all "Eulogies of Zhou" have left traces in the early literary tradition,[13] but the poems associated with King Wu's conquest of the Shang dynasty are particularly visible. In a narrative dated to the year 595 BCE, the *Zuo Tradition* contains the following entry:

> When King Wu conquered Shang, he made a eulogy saying: "[He?] gathered and stored the shields and dagger-axes, gathered and encased the bows and arrows. We strive for admirable virtue, to be dispensed across this [land of] Xia. Truly the king will preserve it!" He further made "Martiality," the final stanza of which says: "[You?] made firm your merits!" Its third [stanza?] says: "[He?] spread out this abundance; we proceed and seek for this to be established." Its sixth [stanza?] says: "[He?] pacified the myriad states, made bounteous harvest-years come in succession." As for martial prowess, [it lies in the sequence of] oppressing violence, storing away weapons, protecting the great [mandate?], establishing merit, pacifying the people, harmonizing the masses, and [creating] bounteous riches. Therefore [King Wu] ensured that sons and grandsons will not forget these stanzas (or: this display of brilliance).[14]

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[12] Wang 1988, 1-51, offers a useful survey of modern scholarship. The Chinese ancestral sacrifice is well captured in Stanley J. Tambiah's definition of ritual: "Ritual is a culturally constructed system of symbolic communication. It is constituted of patterned and ordered sequences of words and acts, often expressed in multiple media, whose content and arrangement are charaterized in varying degree by formality (conventionality), stereotype (rigidity), condensation (fusion), and redundancy (repetition). Ritual action in its constitutive features is performative in these three senses: in the Austinian sense of performative wherein saying something is also doing something as a conventional act; in the quite different sense of a staged performance that uses multiple media by which the participants experience the event intensively; and in the third sense of indexical values—I derive this concept from Peirce—being attached to and inferred by actors during the performance." See Tambiah 1979, 119.

[13] See Ho and Chan 2004. For example, only 11 out of the 31 "Eulogies of Zhou" are quoted in the *Zuo Tradition*.

[14] Xuan 12; Yang Bojun 1992, 744-6; Legge 1985, 320.

While the text claims that King Wu "made" (*zuo*) a "eulogy" (*song*) apparently of several "stanzas" (*zhang*, also the word for "brilliant display"), the individual quotations of different "stanzas" come from four separate "Eulogies of Zhou" (*Mao* 273, 285, 295, 294), not from a single poem. Moreover, in the *Conversations of the States*,[15] the first and most extensive of these quotations is said to come from a "eulogy" by the Duke of Zhou (r. as regent 1042-1036 BCE). Thus, in our two earliest sources for this text, the poems are attributed to either King Wu representing his own accomplishments or to his younger brother, the Duke of Zhou, who commemorated King Wu. Most intriguing, however, is a passage in the Han dynasty compilation *Records of Ritual* (*Liji*) where Kongzi instructs an interlocutor that "music is the representation of accomplishments" and goes on to describe the six pantomimic dance movements of "Martiality" ("Wu") that represented King Wu's conquest of the Shang.[16]

At least in the cultural memory after 771 BCE, and possibly already in the religious and political rituals of the Western Zhou, entire collections of dances, music performances, and poetic texts were employed to communicate the accomplishments of the dynastic founders toward both the spiritual and the political realm. This archaic poetry originated with the ritual specialists of the Zhou royal court. Its preservation and transmission depended on the Zhou political and religious institutions where—according to our earliest sources—it was not merely archived but continuously performed; and while the perspective of the speaker is usually uncertain, the use of first- and second-person personal pronouns suggests dramatic, polyvocal enactments.

By the mid-first millennium BCE, after the Zhou's suzerain power had declined dramatically, its cultural heritage of ritual, music, poetry, and royal speeches was known to be preserved elsewhere: the small eastern state of Lu (in modern Shandong province), birthplace of Kongzi. If, initially, Western Zhou ritual had contained and perpetuated the poetic utterances of hymns and eulogies in the performances of the ancestral sacrifice and other court rituals, over time this relationship between text and ritual became reversed: by the time of Kongzi, when the old rituals had long faded, it was the archaic poetry that preserved the memory of ritual, as is amply expressed in *Poetry* invocations in the *Zuo Tradition*, the primary text to portray the *Poetry* as the core of Chinese cultural memory and coherence.[17]

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[15] *Guoyu* ("Zhou yu, shang") 1.1; Xu Yuanhao 2002, 2.

[16] In the chapter "Records of Music" ("Yueji"). *Liji jijie* 1989, 1023-4; Legge, 1967, 2: 122-3. Modern scholars have invested great efforts in reconstructing the original sequence of "Martiality" from different poems of the "Eulogies of Zhou"; see Wang Guowei 1975, 2.15b-17b; Sun Zuoyun 1966, 239-72; Wang 1988, 8-25; Shaughnessy 1997, 165-95; and, for an excellent recent study, Du Xiaoqin 2013, 1-28.

Almost all “Eulogies of Zhou” are very short: of the thirty-one poems, eight have between 18 and 30 characters; nine between 31 and 40; four between 41 and 50; six between 51 and 60; and only the remaining four hymns have 62, 64, 92, and 124 characters. It is not certain that, originally, these poems existed as discrete, self-contained textual units: first, in the *Zuo Tradition* account quoted above, the eulogies related to King Wu’s conquest form a single unit of several sections or stanzas (*zhang*) while in the *Mao Poetry*, they are divided into individual poems with separate titles.[18] Second, a hymn of just 18 words, accompanied by music and dance, was probably not considered (or performed as) a text of its own. Third, some “Eulogies of Zhou” are closely interrelated: they share entire lines or even couplets with one another but not with other poems, marking them as a single larger unit of text.[19] Thus, of the thirty components of characters of “Year of Abundance” (Mao 279 “Feng nian”), sixteen are verbatim identical to verses in “Clear Away the Grass” (Mao 290 “Zai shan”). At the same time, “Clear Away the Grass” also shares three more lines with “Good Ploughs” (Mao 291 “Liang si”), and additional individual lines with four other neighboring texts.[20] One may, thus, think of the texts of the “Eulogies of Zhou” not as individually authored texts but as variations of material taken from a shared poetic repertoire. This repertoire was largely confined to the “Eulogies” themselves (from which later court hymns then borrowed the occasional line), operating within the formal and semantic constraints of ritual utterances. In the performance of the ancestral sacrifice, they represented configurations of what Jan Assmann calls "identity-securing knowledge" that is "usually performed in the form of a multi-media staging which embeds the linguistic text undetachably in voice, body, miming, gesture, dance, rhythm, and ritual act … By the regularity of their recurrence, feasts and rites grant the imparting and transmission of identity-securing knowledge and hence the reproduction of cultural identity."[21] Not surprisingly, the "Eulogies" are only one arena where this repertoire of memory of the Zhou foundational narrative becomes realized and staged in various textual forms; another place is the sequence of several "harangues" (*shi*) in the *Classic of Documents* where King Wu's conquest is recalled in various speeches attributed to him, with the king staged as speaker.[22]

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[17] For the *Zuo Tradition*, see Schaberg 2001; Pines 2002; Li 2007. For a table and extensive discussion of poetry performances and possible instances of composition in the *Zuo Tradition*, see Zeng Qinliang 1993.

[18] Note that the *Zuo Tradition*, unlike in many other cases of quoting from the *Poetry*, does not mention any of these titles other than “Martiality” (“Wu”).

[19] Thus, the brief hymns numbered 286, 287, 288, and 289 in the *Mao Poetry* share lines in several ways, and only with one another; in addition, they share a number of two-character formulas. See Dobson 1968, Appendix II, 247-9.

[20] Mao 277, 292, 293, 294.

The writing of the *Poetry* was not yet standardized even in Han times, and the different hermeneutic traditions had to make their own choices in constituting the written text by choosing particular characters over other (usually homophonous) ones—and even then, the archaic idiom left multiple possibilities of interpretation. While this situation leads to massive difficulties in the understanding of the hermeneutically open "Airs of the States" (see below), it is less severe in the case of the "Eulogies" and "Court Hymns", despite some uncertainty over certain individual words. Altogether, these ritual poems are semantically overdetermined in their intensity of repetitive, euphonic language, enacting and doubling linguistically the sacrificial rituals during which their performance took place.[23] Their overall lack of ambiguity is further reflected in how the "Eulogies" were used in post-Western Zhou recitation practice as reflected in the *Zuo Tradition*: unlike the "Airs of the States" and "Minor Court Hymns," which were routinely *recited* as coded communication in order to elicit a particular hermeneutic response from the addressee, the "Eulogies", in all cases but one,[24] are *quoted* as proof and explanation in support of an argument.[25] They were considered self-evident, with neither space nor need for interpretation.

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[21] Assmann 1992, 56-7 (my translation); now somewhat rephrased in Assmann 2011, 72.

[22] Nomura 1965; Kern 2017.

[23] On this, see Kern 2009, 164-82.

[24] The single exception is found in Zhao 16; Yang Bojun 1992; Legge 1985, 664.

3. Dynastic Hymns

Like the "Eulogies of Zhou," the "Major" and "Minor Court Hymns" emerged from the rituals of the Zhou royal court. The "Major Court Hymns" tell the story of the Western Zhou—from its glorious founding in the eleventh to its lamentable decline in the eighth century. The "Hymns" were probably performed in mostly secular, political contexts, such as at court banquets and on diplomatic occasions.[26] If the "Eulogies of Zhou" are marked by brevity, lack of rhyme, and comparatively loose meter, the grand dynastic narratives, especially of the "Major Court Hymns", can be described as the exact opposite. Arranged in long, highly regular stanzaic structures,[27] they reflect a developed poetic diction that—if more or less original—cannot be dated before the ninth or eighth century BCE, at the earliest. It remains unknown, however, how much of the regularity in wording, rhyme, meter, stanzaic division, etc. is a feature of original composition as opposed to the work of later editors. To complicate things further, since at least the eighth century, highly archaizing gestures were employed in the royal and regional production of bronze vessels and bells,[28] and similar impulses may have governed the production of poetry, opening a range of possibilities for the original composition of the "Major Court Hymns." To locate these texts in the eleventh or tenth century, or instead in the eighth or seventh century, or even much later, implies different understandings of their nature and purpose. In the first case, they would be regarded as witnesses of their time and most valuable primary sources for the practice and ideology of Western Zhou ritual; in the second, they were monuments of commemoration and idealization, if not artifacts of invented traditions.

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[25] For the presentation of poetry in the *Zuo Tradition*, see Schaberg 1999; Schaberg 2001, 57-95; Zhou 2003; Lewis 1999, 155-76. For the reception of the *Poetry* in the Warring States period, including in the *Zuo Tradition*, see Goldin 2005, 19-35.

[26] The four "Eulogies of Lu" (Mao 297-300) and five "Eulogies of Shang" (Mao 301-305) are likewise banquet hymns, not sacrifical hymns, and believed to come from the Springs and Autumns period states of Lu and Song.

[27] The longest hymns, Mao 256 and 257, contain 450 and 469 characters, respectively. Most hymns contain between 100 and 300 characters.

[28] A poignant case is that of a set of eight inscribed large bells commissioned by Duke Wu of Qin (r. 697-678 BCE), which are best described as archaizing reconfigurations of Western Zhou models; see Kern 2000, 104-5.

The "Major Court Hymns" display a particular focus on King Wen, with two hymns, "King Wen" (Mao 235 "Wen wang") and "King Wen Has Fame" (Mao 244 "Wen wang you sheng"), entirely devoted to his praise. In addition, another five hymns have been read as a set recalling the story of King Wen.[29] Here again, we may be witnessing less a set of discrete poems than a large repertoire of verse from which to recall the origin of the Zhou.

"King Wen," the first of the "Major Court Hymns," unfolds as follows, including shared lines with five other poems, among them "Clear Temple," the first of the "Eulogies of Zhou":

> King Wen is on high, / oh, shining in Heaven. / Though Zhou is an old state, / its mandate, it is new. / With Zhou, he was greatly illustrious, / God's mandate was greatly timely. / King Wen ascends and descends / to God's left side and right.
>
> Vigorous, vigorous was King Wen, / his good fame never ceases. / Arrayed are the bestowals on Zhou, / extending to King Wen's line of descendants. / King Wen's line of descendants / grows as root and branches for a hundred generations. / All the officers of Zhou / shall be greatly illustrious in each generation.
>
> Across generations greatly illustrious / reverently, reverently are they in their plans. / Admirable are the many officers, / they are born in this land of the king. / The king's land is able to give birth to them, / and they are the supporters of Zhou. / Dignified, dignified are the many officers, / King Wen, by them, is at ease.
>
> Solemn, solemn was King Wen, / continuously bright and reverent. / Great indeed is Heaven's mandate, / from Shang's line of descendants. / Shang's line of descendants / were in number a hundred thousand. / [But] God on high gave the mandate, / making them subjects of Zhou.
>
> They were made subjects of Zhou / [but] Heaven's mandate is not constant. / The officers of Yin are eagerly serving, / now conducting libations in the capital [of Zhou]. / When rising to conduct the libations, /

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[29] Mao 245, 250, 237, 241, and 236, in this sequence; see Wang 1988, 73-114.

> they don the customary robes and axe-patterned caps. / Chosen subjects of the king, / never forget your ancestors!
>
> Never forget your ancestors, / display and cultivate their virtue! / Forever strive to conjoin with the mandate, / bringing manifold blessings upon yourself. / When Yin had not yet lost the multitudes, / they were able to conjoin with God on high. / Take [the fate of] Yin as your mirror, / the lofty appointment is not easy [to keep]!
>
> The mandate is not easy [to keep], / may it not cease with you! / Spread and make bright your good fame, / take your measure from and rely on Heaven! / [Yet] the doings of Heaven above / are without sound, without smell— / model yourself on King Wen, / and the myriad states will submit in trust.

According to the sequence of the poems in the *Mao Poetry* and the comments in their prefaces, the first eighteen hymns praise Kings Wen, Wu, and Cheng (r. 1042/35-1006 BCE); the next five reprehend King Li (r. 857/53-842/28 BCE); the next six praise King Xuan (r. 827/25-782 BCE); and the final two reprehend King You (r. 781-771 BCE). The hymns are thus believed to reflect significant moments in the development of the Western Zhou dynasty, beginning with an initial "golden age" and ending with the dynastic collapse under King You, the prototypical "bad last ruler" (and mirror image of the last ruler of Shang).

Traditionally, the hymns, mostly attributed to anonymous court officials, have been regarded as witnesses to, and compositions of, these inflection points; yet they may just as well be products of retrospective imagination. None of the more than ten thousand Western Zhou inscribed bronze vessels, bells, weapons, and other artifacts shares a single couplet with any of the hymns. In the *Zuo Tradition*, one line of four characters from "King Wen" is first quoted in an entry nominally dated to 706 BCE,[30] and another line from the same song appears in an entry dated to 688 BCE.[31] The next recitations of, or short quotations from, "Major Court Hymns" appear only from 655 BCE onward, and even then only very sparingly until about the mid-sixth century BCE, when they begin to occur in somewhat higher frequency.[32] Altogether, only twenty of these thirty-one poems are either mentioned by title or quoted. None is quoted in full, and the only quotation of a full stanza of forty-eight characters appears in the entry for the year 514 BCE.[33] Moreover, quotations or recitations mentioned under particular years in the *Zuo Tradition* did not necessarily take place during these times but may have been inserted when the text was compiled some time in the late fourth century BCE; the same may be true of the eleven "Major Court Hymns" quoted in the *Conversations of the States.*[34] Even if all these references were made on the historical occasions attributed to them, the traces of "Major Court Hymns" in texts from before or during Kongzi's lifetime would still be scant. Aside from a single stanza-length quotation, the textual record contains no more than a few dozen words, beginning in 706 BCE and, hence, post-dating the reigns of the early Zhou kings by more than three centuries.

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[30] Huan 6; Yang Bojun 1992, 113; Legge 1985, 46.

[31] Zhuang 6; Yang Bojun 1992, 169; Legge 1985, 79.

[32] See Zeng 1993. We must distinguish quotations and records of recitations within the *Zuo Tradition* narrative proper from the narrative comments

Two "Major Court Hymns" conclude with four lines that are traditionally understood as self-referential statements on their authorship—that is, statements that would allow us to date the poems:

> Jifu made a recitation, / its lyrics are very grand. / Its air is exceptionally fine, / to be presented to the Lord of Shen.
> ("Grand and Lofty" [Mao 259 "Song gao"])
>
> Jifu made a recitation, / may it be gentle as the clear wind! / Zhong Shanfu bears enduring sorrows; / may it thus soothe his heart.
> ("The Multitudes" [Mao 260 "Zheng min"])

"Jifu" is traditionally identified with an official Yin Jifu ("Overseer Jifu") at the court of King Xuan (827-782 BCE). Not much is known about him, though he is celebrated as a military leader in the poem "The Sixth Month" (Mao 177 "Liu yue") as well as in the *Bamboo Annals* (*Zhushu jinian*), a pre-imperial text discovered in an ancient tomb in 281 CE. The reference to Jifu in Mao 259 and 260 seems to provide the poems with an author and historical anchor, dating the text

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attributed to "a noble man" (*junzi*) or Kongzi, which seem to be a much later textual layer. For the comments by the "noble man" and Kongzi, see Henry 1999; also Schaberg 2005.

[33] From "Great indeed" (Mao 241), a poem of altogether 393 characters; in Zhao 28; Yang Bojun 1992, 1495; Legge 1985, 727. A second, shorter, stanza of a hymn is quoted in a Kongzi comment for the year 522 BCE.

[34] Ho and Chan 2004.

into King Xuan's reign. Yet, in both hymns, no individual voice is discernable prior to the final quatrain, which, furthermore, is formally set apart by a new rhyme. And while the two poems are quoted 110 times in early texts,[35] the final quatrains are never invoked, nor does any other early text attribute either song (or any other text) to Jifu. Finally, "recitation" refers to performance rather than original composition.

In China, the notion of the poet as autonomous creator did not exist before the early empire in the second century BCE. With the possible exception of, at most, four poems—all of them "Airs of the States"[36]—the *Zuo Tradition* speaks only of performances of anonymous (if canonical) poetry, not of acts of poetic composition. Like virtually all pre-imperial texts that invoke lines from the *Poetry*, it is fundamentally unconcerned with a poem's moment of origin as opposed to its interpretability and applicability. The recently discovered bamboo manuscript "Kongzi's Discussion of the *Poetry*"[37] does not touch on authorship or origin but instead defines the poems in broad semantic terms, perhaps for instruction on their appropriate use.[38] In the received pre-imperial literature, only one passage in *Mencius* (*Mengzi*) 5A.4 claims that in order to understand a poem correctly, one must trace the "intent" (*zhi*) it represents, but even here, "intent" is not identified with the authorial mind. Such disinterest in individual authorship extends beyond poetry into the larger textual tradition; for example, none of the dozens of recently discovered literary or philosophical manuscripts contains an authorial attribution. It remains uncertain what "Jifu made a recitation" may have meant to a pre-imperial Chinese audience. Jifu the author may have been irrelevant; but Jifu the reciter excelled in his role as a high official, bringing lines from the *Poetry* to bear on matters significant to his lord.

In the *Zuo Tradition*, in place of scenes of poetic composition, we find scenes of poetic performance, usually with the purpose of admonition or diplomatic exchange; accordingly, the place of the named author is often taken by the named, sometimes even prominent, reciter.[39] Here, the reciter skillfully articulates a latent poetic meaning recognizable by the cultural and political élite across the Chinese realm. This meaning is not fixed or obvious but requires a perspicacious recipient to match the poem with the situation at hand; the *Zuo Tradition* contains several anecdotes where the addressee fails to grasp the import of a recitation. Such failure disgraces the person: having never learned the art of poetic application (*Analects* 13.5), he "stands with his face straight to the wall" (*Analects* 17.10), separated from the communal agreement regarding its potential "intent."

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[35] Ibid.

[36] These are poems 54, 57, 79, and 131, mentioned for the years 720 (Yin 3; Mao 57), 660 (Min 2; Mao 54, 79), and 621 (Wen 6; Mao 131) BCE. However, in each case the verb interpreted as "made" is *fu*, the standard term for "to present" (as song or recitation). Despite early commentarial claims, it is not certain that, in these four cases, it means "to make."

[37] See Ma Chengyuan 2001, 13-41, 121-68.

[38] See Kern 2015.

From this perspective, the two poems where "Jifu made a recitation" are inscribed with a fourfold representation: of the poems themselves, of their canonicity that made them fit for recitation, of the exemplary and prominent reciter, and of the perspicacious addressee, King Xuan. The concluding quatrains thus comment on the poems' early history of application and reception: while adapted to the poetic form, they stand outside of the poems themselves.

"The Jiang and Han" (Mao 262 "Jiang Han"), at 193 characters a "Major Court Hymn" of average length, reveals how this composite nature could cross over into other, non-poetic genres:

> The Jiang and the Han were surging, surging, / the warriors were streaming, streaming. / Not resting, not at leisure, / the Huai barbarians, these they assaulted. / Now they moved our chariots, / now they planted our banners. / Not resting, not at ease, / the Huai barbarians, these they harassed.
>
> The Jiang and the Han were swelling, swelling, / the warriors were rushing, rushing. / They ordered and organized the four quarters, / reported the accomplishment to the King. / The four quarters were now pacified, / the royal state, it was settled. / And thus, there was no strife, / the King's heart, it was at peace.

The first two stanzas offer a typical narrative, in this case, of how the Zhou vanquished the southern barbarians. The diction shifts fundamentally beginning in stanza three:

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[39] For a comparative study on authorship in the *Poetry* and in early Greece, different in emphasis from the present essay, see Beecroft 2010; also Beecroft 2014.

> On the banks of the Jiang and the Han, / the King commanded Hu of Shao: / "Ah! Open up the four quarters! / Clear our border lands! / Not causing anguish, not pressing, / let [the people] be drawn to the royal state. / Go to draw borders, go to draw divisions, / reach as far as the southern sea."
>
> The King commanded Hu of Shao: / "There you go around, / there you make announcements. / When Kings Wen and Wu received the mandate, / the Duke of Shao, he was their pillar. / Do not say: 'I am but the small child.' / The Duke of Shao, him you succeed. / You commenced and pursued great achievement, / for this, I bestow blessings on you."

The final two stanzas provide an account of the gifts the King gives to Hu of Shao, followed by Hu thanking the King:

> "I give you a jaden libation ladle, / one [bronze] vessel for flavored black-millet ale. / Announce this to your accomplished ancestors: / I bestow on you hills, land, and fields. / In Zhou you receive the command, / to continue the ancestral command of Shao." / Hu made obeisance with his head to the ground: / "To the Son of Heaven, a myriad years!"
>
> Hu made obeisance with his head to the ground: / "May I requite by extolling the royal blessings; / may I rise to my ancestral Duke of Shao! / To the Son of Heaven, a myriad years! / Bright, bright is the Son of Heaven, / his illustrious fame will not cease. / He spreads his civil virtue, / harmonizing this state throughout its four quarters!"

This poem, traditionally dated into the reign of King Xuan, is typical in its narrative voice devoid of any particular identity; even its two speaking voices show numerous parallels elsewhere. Eleven out of the sixteen lines of the first two stanzas are shared with ritual poems from the "Eulogies," "Major," and "Minor Court Hymns,"[40] revealing "The Jiang and the Han" as a modular text from the linguistic repertoire of court ritual. Of the related poems, none is identical to any other, but most are alike, together constituting a single totalizing narrative of Zhou, and circumscribed by a limited lexicon and tight formal structure: tetrasyllabic lines, extensive use of end-rhyme, frequent reduplicative binomes, and a small set of syntactic patterns. These features embody the ideology of Zhou ritual especially in its orientation toward the ancestral past: the old is always the model of the new, and the new never fully its own but shared with other ritual expressions. In 809 BCE, the following text of 97 characters was cast into the inner walls of a bronze tripod:

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[40] Poems 164, 168, 177, 179, 183, 204 (two lines), 205, 208, 223, 227 (two lines), 234, 238, 241, 245, 263, 274, 299, 300, 302.

> It was the 19th year, the fourth month, after the full moon, the day *xinmao*. The King was in the Zhao [Temple] of the Kang Palace. He arrived at the Grand Chamber and assumed his position. Assisted to his right by Intendant Xun, [I,] Feng, entered the gate. [I] assumed [my] position in the center of the court, facing north [toward the King]. Secretary Liu presented the King with the written command. The King called out to the Secretary of the Interior, [?], to announce the written bestowal to [me,] Feng: "[I bestow on you] a black jacket with embroidered hem, red kneepads, a scarlet demi-circlet, a chime pennant, and a bridle with bit and cheekpieces; use [these] to perform your service!" [I] made obeisance with my head to the ground. [May I] dare in response to extol the Son of Heaven's greatly illustrious and abundant blessings and on account of this make for my August Deceased Father, the Elder Zheng(?), and his wife Zheng [this] precious tripod! May [I enjoy] extended longevity for ten thousand years! May sons of sons, grandsons of grandsons, forever treasure [this tripod]![41]

The inscription documents a royal appointment together with the ceremony in which it was presented. It is largely identical with four other inscriptions, dating from 825 through 789 BCE, that record the appointment ceremonies of other appointees to different positions.[42] About one hundred such appointment inscriptions cast into bronze vessels from the ninth and eighth centuries have been excavated so far, showing a continuous ritual and administrative practice together with its institutional textual memory at court. About half a dozen of them record in detail the ceremony of appointment itself.

The parallels to "The Jiang and the Han" are obvious. The language of a bronze text, specific in its date and purpose but generic in its diction, was appropriated for a general celebratory hymn to extol and perpetuate the glory of the Zhou dynasty. The bronze text itself was based on a royal "command" first written on a bundle of bamboo slips. This command was recited at the appointment ceremony and then transformed twice. First, it was transformed into the contents of a bronze inscription: for this purpose, the narrative of the ceremony was added to historicize the command proper, and a final prayer for blessings was added to adapt the overall account to a religious address to Hu's ancestors. Second, the bamboo text (or the bronze inscription) was also extended into a hymn. Here, the specific case of a ceremonial court appointment was integrated into the general narrative of the Zhou. While the inscription was largely interchangeable with other inscriptions of the "appointment" genre, the hymn was shaped by the poetic idiom of a court hymn.

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[41] Chen Hanping 1986, 17-20; Chen Peifen 1982, 26.

[42] See Kern 2007a.

Compared to the unified, coherent inscription, "The Jiang and the Han" falls into two distinctly different units: the first built entirely from language shared with other hymns, the second containing numerous parallels with two sets of texts: bronze inscriptions and the Zhou royal speeches preserved in the *Classic of Documents*. Expressions such as "the King commanded (a person)," the "bestowal" of insignia and gifts, "border lands," "I am but the small child," "one [bronze] vessel for flavored black-millet ale," "to announce toward," "to receive the mandate in Zhou," "to make obeisance with his head to the ground," "in response extol," and "royal blessings" are all phrases that—except for "I am but the small child" (in the "Eulogies" 286, 287, and 288)—appear nowhere else in the *Poetry* but repeatedly in royal speeches and bronze inscriptions. Moreover, lines such as "Do not say: 'I am but a small child'," "I bestow on you hills, land, and fields," and "may I rise to my ancestral Duke of Shao" are prose phrases that despite their tetrasyllabic form violate standard poetic rhythm. These observations match the poem's rhyme patterns: stanzas one and two are highly regularly rhymed, fully in accordance with other ritual hymns; in stanza three, the rhyming becomes loose, while in stanzas four and five, it unravels, rendering the poem unfit for vocal musical performance. In stanza six, for a final return to the idiom of Zhou hymnic praise, the text resumes a more regular pattern of rhymes.

As such, "The Jiang and the Han" is a composite text, compiled from various sources and linguistic registers rather than authored by a poet. In its present form, it probably never functioned as a performance text but, instead, as a bookish, commemorative record of the idealized rituals of Zhou, composed from the fragments of archaic verse and ceremony. Remarkably, the poem does not appear in any other pre-imperial text. Likewise, the extensive "Minor Court Hymn" "Thorny Caltrop" (Mao 209 "Chuci"), which integrates a polyvocal representation of the performance of an ancestral sacrifice within a narrative framework, has left barely a trace in the pre-imperial record.[43]

This greatly complicates the ways in which we imagine the origins of Chinese poetry, and of the *Poetry* anthology, even though some linguistic strata are demonstrably archaic. The anthology contains groups and sub-repertoires of texts that are not authored but compiled, that are composite and modular in structure, that are sometimes too short to stand on their own, and sometimes too long to be taken as unified poems, and that have the early reception and compilation history of the *Poetry* inscribed into them. The "Eulogies" and "Court Hymns" are layered, diachronic artifacts whose (re)composition extended across the first millennium BCE. Warring States and early imperial sources introduce most quotations from the *Poetry* with the words "a poem says," which also means "The *Poetry* says." Without references to authors or titles, these quotations invoke not individual texts but the poetic and ritual tradition as a whole. Even for the historically oriented "Eulogies" and "Hymns," we do not know to what extent their received form may have predated the compilation of the anthology, and when and where this compilation took place.[44]

4. "Airs of the States"

Many of the 160 "Airs of the States," arranged under the headings of fifteen North Chinese states and regions, express profound, archetypical human sentiments—the longing of the lover, the suffering of the soldier, the resentment of the overtaxed farmer—that can be experienced in any place and at any time. Five of the fifteen sections of the "Airs" are not represented at all in the *Zuo Tradition*. Altogether, only ten poems from the "Airs" are quoted there, each of them very briefly,

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[43] For an extensive study of this hymn, see Kern 2000a. While initially, I had taken the poem as a sacrificial performance text, I now see it as a composite artifact commemorating the rituals of old by drawing on their archaic language; see Kern 2009, 173-7.

[44] I refrain from discussing in detail the "Minor Court Hymns." While traditionally believed to postdate the "Major Court Hymns," no such conclusion holds. Many of the seventy-four "Minor Court Hymns" are layered and composite texts as well, and, furthermore, are organized in sub-repertoires.

[45] possibly four are said to have been composed on a particular occasion,[46] and another twenty-five titles are said to have been recited, often clustered in a single exchange of recitations.[47] While certain poems can be integrated into historical narratives of the *Zuo Tradition* or later sources, such a connection is usually neither unambiguous nor necessary. While the origins of the "Eulogies" and "Hymns" are identified in the ritual culture of the Zhou royal court, no such institutional background can be recognized for the "Airs." Aside from the attributions furnished in their individual *Mao Poetry* prefaces, few poems can be anchored historically, or provide internal evidence for their dating. Royal officials are said to have collected the "Airs" from among the common folk, set them to music, and presented them to the Zhou king for him to gauge the sentiments and well-being of the populace. This legend appears to have gained wider currency only in Han times, possibly as a reflection of the collection of regional music at the Han imperial court.[48]

The traditional view of the "Airs" maintains several notions: (a) the poems originated from specific geographic regions; (b) they were expressive of popular sentiment and hence revealed the socio-political and moral conditions of their times; and (c) because of their folk origin, they were endowed with fundamental truth claims. In China, the notion of the "Airs" as folk songs gained particular prominence since the early twentieth century, following the lead of European Romanticism, such as Herder's perception of popular song as the true and original voice of the nation. With the collapse of the Chinese empire and the rise of democratic and nationalistic ideas, the need for a Chinese literary history beyond the Confucian scholastic tradition was felt with particular urgency. In the wake of the May Fourth literary and political revolution of 1919, this history was found in the "discovery" of the novel, of drama, and of folk poetry—at exactly the same time when in the West, Milman Parry and Albert Lord developed their theory of oral-formulaic composition. Meanwhile, the French sociologist and sinologist Marcel Granet interpreted the "Airs" as expressions of ancient Chinese popular festivals and customs.[49] Diverse as they are, the ideas of Herder, Parry and Lord, and Granet proved immensely influential in modern scholarship.[50] The view of the "Airs" as the genuine, if artistically polished, expression of the common folk—in China all but orthodox—connects effortlessly with the Han legend of popular songs collected by court officials and early Chinese political philosophy in general.

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[45] Mao 7 (Cheng 7), 17 (Xiang 7), 18 (Xiang 7), 26 (Xiang 31), 33 (Xuan 2), 35 (Xi 33), 38 (Xiang 9), 58 (Cheng 8), 116 (Ding 10), 160 (Zhao 20).

[46] This remains uncertain; see note 38 above.

[47] In Wen 13 (614 BCE), poem 54; in Cheng 9 (582 BCE), poem 27; in Xiang 8 (565 BCE), poem 20; in Xiang 14 (559 BCE), poem 34; in Xiang 19 (554 BCE), poem 54; in Xiang 26 (547 BCE), poems 75 and 76; in Xiang 27 (546 BCE), poems 14, 49, 94, 114, and separately 52; in Xiang 29 (544 BCE), poem 36; in Zhao 1 (541 BCE), poems 12, 13, and 23; in Zhao 2 (540 BCE), poems 55 and 64, and separately 16; in Zhao 16 (526 BCE), poems 80, 83, 85, 87, 90, and 94; and in Ding 4 (506 BCE), poem 133.

[48] See Kern 2004, 33-40.

The most famous example of a poem composed in response to the historical circumstances of its time is "Yellow Bird" (Mao 131 "Huang niao") in the "Airs of Qin":

> *Jiao-jiao* cry the yellow birds, / settling on the jujube tree. / Who followed Lord Mu? / Ziju Yanxi! / Truly, this Yanxi, / the finest of a hundred men! / He draws close to the pit, / trembling, trembling in terror. / Heaven, the azure one, / slays our good man! / If one could ransom him, ah— / a hundred men for his life!
>
> *Jiao-jiao* cry the yellow birds, / settling on the mulberry tree. / Who followed Lord Mu? / Ziju Zhonghang! / Truly, this Zhonghang, / a match for a hundred men! / He draws close to the pit, / trembling, trembling in terror. / Heaven, the azure one, / slays our good man! / If one could ransom him, ah— / a hundred men for his life!
>
> *Jiao-jiao* cry the yellow birds, / settling on the caltrop bush. / Who followed Lord Mu? / Ziju Qianhu! / Truly, this Qianhu, / a guard against a hundred men! / He draws close to the pit, / trembling, trembling in terror. / Heaven, the azure one, / slays our good man. / If one could ransom him, ah— / a hundred men for his life!

For the year 621 BCE, the *Zuo Tradition* narrates that at the burial of Lord Mu of Qin, Yanxi, Zhonghang, and Qianhu followed him into the grave as human sacrifices, whereupon "the men of the state mourned them, and on their behalf recited 'Yellow Bird'."[51] Here we have the single most plausible case where *fu* ("to present," "to recite") should be taken as "to make,", which is, quite naturally, how the *Mao* preface interprets the situation. Note, however, that the "men of the state" (*guoren*) are not the common folk but members of the Qin court élite.

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[49] Granet 1919.

[50] For an application of the Parry-Lord theory to the "Airs," see Wang 1974. For a recent comparative reading of the "Airs" as expressive of communal feasts as well as of gender relations in Chinese antiquity, see Zhou 2010.

This rare example, where the *Zuo Tradition* relates not only a poem's historical context but also its act of composition, generates credibility for the general idea that early Chinese poetry could emerge in response to specific circumstances—even though no poem from the "Airs," unlike the "Major Court Hymns," contains a sustained historical narrative. The underlying dictum that "poetry expresses intent" makes poetry symptomatic and revealing, and endows it with an unquestionable truth claim. It also encourages the identification of authorial agency, even in semi-anonymous terms such as "the men of the state." Yet the poetics attributed to the "Airs" frame authorship not as autonomous or creative. A poem is not "made" by a controlling poet but arises from history, and its truth claim rests precisely in the absence of authorial control and artful manipulation. Thus, early Chinese aesthetic appreciation is primarily concerned with how a poem matches the world it depicts. As individual poems could, thus, be decoded—or constituted—as symptom and omen, so could the entire body of the *Poetry*. Consider the performance of dance, music, and song that the court of Lu gave to Prince Ji Zha of Wu, who, in 544 BCE, requested to be allowed to "observe the music of Zhou." The *Zuo Tradition* provides the following account of his judgment of the different "Airs":

> He asked to observe the music of Zhou. When the musicians were made to sing for him the "South of Zhou" and "South of Shao," he said, "How beautiful! They have begun to give it a foundation. It is not yet done, yet they are assiduous and uncomplaining."
> When they sang the "Bei," "Yong," and "Wei" for him, he said, "How beautiful! How profound! These are anxious but not hindered by difficulties. I have heard that the virtue of Kang Shu and Duke Wu of Wei was just so; these must be the airs of Wei!"
> When they sang the "Royal Domain" for him, he said, "How beautiful! They are thoughtful but unafraid; these would be from Zhou's move to the east."

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[51] Wen 6; Yang Bojun 1992, 546-7; Legge 1985, 244.

> When they sang the "Zheng" for him, he said, "How beautiful! Already they are very trivial, and the people cannot bear it. Surely this will be the first to perish."
> When they sang the "Qi" for him, he said, "How beautiful! How expansive! They are indeed great airs. It is one who faced the eastern sea—this would be the Grand Duke. The state cannot yet be measured."
> When they sang the "Bin" for him, he said "How beautiful! How grandiose! They are joyous but not lascivious. These would be the Duke of Zhou's move to the east."
> When they sang the "Qin" for him, he said, "This is what is known as the grand sound. What is capable of being grand is great, and these are the perfection of greatness: these would be from Zhou's past."
> When they sang the "Wey" for him, he said, "How beautiful! How buoyant! They are great yet subtle, rugged yet easy to traverse. With virtue to support these things, there would be an enlightened ruler."
> When they sang the "Tang" for him, he said, "What profundity of thought! These would be the remaining scions of the Taotang line! Otherwise, how could their concern extend so far? If not the descendants of fine virtue, who would be capable of this?"
> When they sang the "Chen" for him, he said, "That state is without a master. How can it last long?"
> For "Kuai" and the others, he made no remark.[52]

While Ji Zha's comments on the "Court Hymns," "Eulogies," and dances all praise the glory of antiquity, his remarks on the "Airs" are more complex, including—with the "Airs of Zheng" and the "Airs of Chen"—predictions of future demise. Altogether, they take poetry as symptomatic of socio-political realities, as is stated in the (Han dynasty?) "Great Preface" to the *Poetry*:

> The tones of a well-governed era are at ease and lead to joy; its rulership is harmonious. The tones of an era in turmoil are bitter and lead to anger; its rulership is perverse. The tones of a perishing state are lamenting and lead to longing; its people are in difficulty.

The performance for Ji Zha comprises the entirety of the *Poetry*; the only section not mentioned in the passage above is the "Airs of Cao" (presumably contained among "the others" on which Ji Zha made no remark). In terms of their sequence, the first eight sections of "Airs" for Ji Zha—from the two "South" regions through the "Airs of Qi"—match the arrangement in the *Mao Poetry*, whereas the performance of the remaining sections from "Bin" to "Kuai" are in a wildly different order. It may not be accidental that of the altogether forty-three instances of "Airs" mentioned or recited in the *Zuo Tradition*,[53] thirty-seven are from the first seven sections in the *Mao Poetry*. We do not know which individual poems were performed for Ji Zha, but does their representation in the *Zuo Tradition* reflect the historical development of the *Poetry* as a canonical collection? Whatever the case, the concert, or rather its description in the *Zuo Tradition*, treats the *Poetry*, or "poetry," as a unified and circumscribed discourse. While the textual integrity and identity of individual poems remains elusive prior to their *Mao Poetry* arrangement, the integrity and unity of the overall discourse was established no later than by the fourth century BCE.

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[52] Translation taken from Schaberg 2001, 87-8; for an excellent discussion of the event, see ibid., 86-95.

The above observations regarding the composite, modular, and sometimes diachronic nature of the "Court Hymns" and "Eulogies," and their possible early existence less in discrete poems than in repertoires of poetic material, can be extended to the "Airs of the States" as well. While no received pre-imperial text contains an entire poem from the "Airs," the newly discovered manuscript "Qi ye" from ca. 300 BCE furnishes just such a case with the poem "Cricket" (Mao 114 "Xi shuai") from the "Airs of Tang."[54] The received text has twenty-four tetrasyllabic lines in three stanzas; the manuscript version appears to have thirty (some lines are broken off on the bamboo slips), three of which contain not four but six characters. Of the twenty-three complete lines in the manuscript, just three match the wording of the received version; otherwise, we find numerous lexical variants, text transposed across lines, additional lines, and different rhymes. While the received text contains three reduplicatives typical of the diction of the *Poetry*, the manuscript has none. According to its preface in the *Mao Poetry*, "Cricket" was directed against Duke Xi of Jin, who ruled in the late ninth century BCE, for his excessive frugality; in the manuscript, the poem is performed (extemporized?) by the Duke of Zhou at a banquet two centuries earlier.

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[53] Not including the comments by Kongzi and the "noble man."

[54] See Li Xueqin 2010, 150, and plates 67-8. Together with other texts, "Qi ye" was presumably looted from a southern tomb. It was purchased on the Hong Kong antiquities market and "donated to" Qinghua University in Beijing.

Much ink has been spilled on deciding whether we are looking at two versions of a single text or two different poems (and on the question of which of the texts may be the “more original” one), but these seem to be the wrong questions. Clearly, the texts are related yet also too different to surmise that one, somehow, had evolved from the other. It is more productive to see the two poems as separate instantiations of a shared topic and repertoire of poetic expression that was available to be organized in multiple ways. Unless the manuscript is a forgery, “Cricket” is, hence, the first case to compare an entire multi-stanza poem from the received anthology with an ancient parallel version. Perhaps such different versions were the kind of “duplicates” that Kongzi, according to Sima Qian, had removed to trim the corpus of three thousand down to three hundred poems. In the process, one version was chosen (and further edited) and the other rejected; moreover, that choice was also one between two different historical contextualizations and, hence, interpretations. This explains how a “single” poem could be referred to in entirely different ways. The same is the case with the famous example of “Zhongzi, Please!” (Mao 76 “Qiang Zhongzi”):

> Zhongzi, please! / Do not leap into our hamlet, / do not break the willow trees we have planted. / How would I dare to care for them, / yet I am fearful of my father and mother. / Zhongzi is truly to be loved, / yet the words of father and mother / are also truly to be feared.
>
> Zhongzi, please! / Do not leap across our wall, / do not break the mulberry trees we have planted. / How would I dare to care for them, / yet I am fearful of my older brothers. / Zhongzi is truly to be loved, / yet the words of my older brothers / are also truly to be feared.
>
> Zhongzi, please! / Do not leap into our garden, / do not break the sandalwood trees we have planted. / How would I dare to care for them, / yet I am fearful of the many words by the people. / Zhongzi is truly to be loved, / yet the many words by the people / are also truly to be feared.

According to its *Mao Poetry* preface, the poem satirizes Duke Zhuang of Zheng who in 722 BCE had failed to rein in his mother and younger brother, bringing strife and chaos into his state. According to the *Zuo Tradition*, the poem was recited in 547 BCE in order to have the Marquis of Wei released from imprisonment in the state of Jin;[55] and according to the "Kongzi's Discussion of the *Poetry*" manuscript, one must be fearful of the words of "Qiang Zhong[zi]."[56] In the "Five Modes of Conduct" manuscript from Mawangdui, the poem is invoked in a discussion of the rhetorical device of "using sexual allure to illustrate ritual propriety," where it is paraphrased through a series of rhetorical questions asking whether someone would copulate in front of his parents, brothers, or neighbors. Much later readings by Zheng Qiao (1104-1162) and Zhu Xi (1130-1200) take the received poem as "the words of a licentious eloper," while modern readers see it as the words of a young woman who fears that her lover's impetuosity will compromise her social reputation.[57]

The case of "Zhongzi, Please!" may appear extreme, but it is not; pre-imperial and Han interpretations of the first and most famous of the "Airs," "Ospreys" (Mao 1 "Guanju") are just as diverse, taking the poem as (a) praising King Wen, (b) criticizing King Kang (r. 1005/3-978 BCE), or (c) another example of "using sexual allure to illustrate ritual propriety," ironically placing what in the *Mao Poetry* is one of the most notorious poems, "Zhongzi, Please!," side by side with the paramount expression of exemplary virtue, "Ospreys."[58] These are not merely differences in interpretation of the same text; they are readings of different texts as the poems were constituted only by way of their commentaries and applications, which, on the most basic textual level, could involve different choices among homophonous characters of potentially vastly different, even opposite, meanings. Poems such as "Ospreys," "Cricket," or "Zhongzi, Please!" came into being only over time, and then repeatedly in changing configurations through continuing processes of composition, performance, rhetorical application, historical contextualization, fixation in writing, and literary interpretation. In each case, there would not have been any single original poem to begin with—instead, each of these titles signified a circumscribed repertoire of expressions and meanings that could be actualized in different ways under different circumstances. While key lines of the poems proved stable (as attested in manuscripts), an entire poem like "Cricket" could be configured in various ways.

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[55] Xiang 26; Yang Bojun 1992, 1117; Legge 1985, 525.

[56] Huang Huaixin 2004, 97-9.

[57] For full discussion, see Kern 2010, 47, passim; further Kern 2007b.

[58] See Kern 2010 and 2007b for extensive discussion and references to earlier scholarship.

These observations, made possible by the very recent manuscript finds, profoundly destabilize our traditional assumptions about the origins and authorship of the "Airs." They also throw into relief some of the deepest contradictions in the interpretation of these poems over time. The Kongzi of the *Analects* states that "the three hundred poems may be covered in one phrase: no wayward thoughts" (*Analects* 2.2), and Sima Qian notes that Kongzi, when selecting the poems, "chose [only] what could be matched to the principles of ritual"; but commentators across two millennia have struggled with the fact that entire sections of the *Poetry*, especially the "Airs of Zheng" that include "Zhongzi, Please!," appear as expressions of inappropriate sexual desire.[59] We cannot establish the identity of the poems found in the received *Mao Poetry* with whatever was quoted or referenced under the same title before the formation of the anthology. We do not know whether or not the poems were based on a "moral orthodoxy",[60] as claimed in the *Analects*, and how such orthodoxy might have manifested itself in their literary diction. Both the "Five Modes of Conduct" and "Kongzi's Discussion of the *Poetry*" signal that modern readings of the poems, as readings of the literary surface of texts whose original form we do not know, are fundamentally inadequate: while the manuscripts, the *Mao Poetry*, and the Han dynasty "Three Schools" readings all diverge, they agree on one principle, which is also noted in *Mencius* 5A.4: the meaning of a poem is encoded below its literary surface and can only be retrieved by a sophisticated hermeneutical procedure. This procedure unfolds not in the interpretation of a pre-existing text but in the process of performance and application that constitutes the poem ever anew, and in changing semantic configurations. This is evident from Kongzi's dictum that to master the *Poetry* means to know how to apply its verses as coded communication in diplomatic intercourse (*Analects* 13.5), and, in reverse, from those moments of failure in the *Zuo Tradition* narrative where a persona proves unable to grasp the import of what is being recited to him.

This conclusion finally leads us back to the question of the origins of the "Airs" as folk songs. Aside from ideological constructions both ancient and modern, we must not confuse the poetic persona and voice within the text with the author outside of it. Nothing suggests that poems singing of the toils and sorrows of the people were actually composed by *hoi polloi.* And if they were, it would not matter: the earliest moments where we encounter the poems are already moments of reception, interpretation, and reconfiguration. For more than two millennia, there has never been an "original text" available whose "original meaning" could be grasped, nor will any newly discovered manuscript ever take us *ad fontes*.

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[59] For a convenient survey, see Wong and Lee 1989.

[60] Yu 1987, 49.

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3

COMPARING THE COMINGS INTO BEING OF HOMERIC EPIC AND THE *SHIJING*

Alexander BEECROFT

To describe the coming into being of either Homeric epic or the *Shijing* is a challenging matter (though a task to which the authors of the preceding chapters are ideally suited); to attempt to compare these two complex processes may seem more daunting still. And yet, as Margalit Finkelberg and Martin Kern have both shown, the textual histories of these two traditions have much in common, and a comparison of the two processes reveal striking similarities. Both textual evolutions have obscure beginnings in periods prior to the regular use of written language to transmit poetry, and both, consequently, probably entail the adaptation of material whose first life was primarily in performance for the medium of writing. The origins of both traditions were themselves the object of myth-making, and contemporary scholarship must negotiate these myths as it seeks to develop more rigorous theories. Each tradition likely evolved over time, such that the origins of each are extremely early, while the fixed and final version of each is perhaps later than tradition asserts, and it is difficult to know which precise moment in this evolution we should identify as the moment of textual genesis. Another consequence of this gradual evolution is the difficulty of applying modern notions of authorship to either tradition, and the challenges of understanding the kinds of authorship ancient audiences imagined for each.

To some extent, these similarities are likely shared among the broader group of highly canonical ancient texts gradually assembled out of disparate, and at least partly oral, traditions: archaic Greek lyric and the early Chinese philosophical texts within these traditions, for example; and texts such as the great Sanskrit epics, the Hebrew Bible, the New Testament, and the Qu'ran in other traditions. All of these corpuses have incredibly complex and opaque textual histories, and have been the subject of various kinds of myth-making around their origins among their devoted readers. Broader comparative efforts involving a larger number of such texts would be almost certain to yield interesting insights into the processes of large-scale textual production in pre-modern, and often pre-literate times.

There are, however, also significant similarities between the worlds in which Homeric epic and the *Shijing* were created that may account for some of the particular features of both textual histories. Archaic and Classical Greece, and the roughly-contemporary Chinese world of the "Spring and Autumn" and "Warring States" eras, were alike regions of great political fragmentation, each dominated by small city-states and/or regional states, and, at the same time, the sites for an emergent sense of cultural commonality that transcended the local political context. I have elsewhere identified this political-cultural assemblage as "panchoric," and have argued that Greek and Chinese conceptions of authorship, particularly around poetic texts, emerged, in part, as a means of negotiating this complex landscape.[1] In particular, the fact that the mythologies for the composition of both Homeric epic and the *Shijing* involve the collecting of disparate textual units scattered over the panchoric territory (a phenomenon I return to below) seems suggestive in this light.

Perhaps the most fundamental similarity, however, between these two stories is a question more of absence than of presence. The cold, harsh reality is that the list of facts we actually *know* about the origins of each is depressingly brief. As of now, the oldest manuscript traditions for Homeric epic are scattered papyrus fragments from Egypt and Nubia dating to the third century BC; many of the papyri of the second, and even the first, centuries BC contain plus-verses,[2] that is, they include lines not found in the medieval manuscript tradition, though rarely in ways that would alter the meaning of the text to any significant degree. We find quotations from Homer in fifth-century texts and especially in Plato, though again Plato's Homer is often not precisely equivalent to the Homer of the medieval manuscript tradition in ways that are often quietly edited out of modern editions of Plato.[3] Alexandrian scholarship (as reflected in the later scholia) offered an abundance of commentary on the suitability or otherwise of many Homeric lines, including, occasionally, lines not found in our editions, but opinions vary as to the influence these scholars had on the later tradition.[4] There are, of course, earlier references to the stories found in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. Vase-paintings of Odysseus' blinding of the Cyclops become common, for example, around 675 BC, and images representing other scenes specifically found in the *Iliad* or *Odyssey* emerge somewhat later, with relatively few before around 600 BC.[5] The textual tradition shows a similar pattern, with Archaic lyric poetry showing an awareness of the broad outlines of the Troy tale. Early in the fifth century BC, Homer himself is explicitly named by Simonides (see Athenaeus 4.172e) and by Pindar (*Isth*. 4.55; *Pyth*. 4.277; *Nem*. 7.21). Both poets name Homer in order to connect their versions of particular myths with those presented in Homeric epic. Simonides, in presenting his own version of the story of Meleager in his *Europa*, cites Stesichorus and Homer as witnesses, while Pindar (*Isth*. 4.55 and *Nem*. 7.21) contrasts his own representation of Ajax to that found in Homer. The mention of Homer in *Pythian* 4 includes a verbal echo of *Iliad* 15.207, suggesting that the language, as well as the stories, of Homeric epic were relatively well-established by this time. Simonides' reference is to an episode in our *Iliad*, while Pindar's Homer may also include the *Aethiopis*, which discussed the suicide of Ajax. Certainly, Herodotus famously argues against Homeric authorship for the *Cypria* (2.116-17), suggesting both that such an attribution was available in the mid-fifth century BC, and that it was capable of being disputed. To synthesize, then, available evidence confirms that the stories of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* were popular by the end of the seventh century BC, and that these stories were attributed to someone named Homer by the beginning of the fifth century, with a relatively (but perhaps not absolutely) fixed text. Further details must remain speculative, even if reinforced by theoretical and evidentiary considerations.

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[1] See Beecroft 2010 and Beecroft 2015 (chapter 2).

[2] Haslam 1997.

[3] Still important here is Labarbe 1949.

Likewise, we can say little with absolute confidence about the dating of the *Shijing*. Passages from the *Shi* are quoted in the *Lunyu*, or *Analects*, of Confucius, and in the *Zuozhuan*, an important historical text, among other places, but the dating of both these texts is itself uncertain: the *Zuozhuan* is fairly generally thought to date to the fourth century BC, and while some of the stories in the *Analects* may date back to the life of Confucius itself, the completed text as we have it may date to around 150 BC.[6] Archaeology provides further evidence, as Martin Kern observes in his essay (50-9). Kai Vogelsang, in an extensive study of the language of the *gao* chapters of the *Documents* and that of bronze inscriptions, and drawing in part on the work of Vassilij M. Krjukov in Russian, suggests that the language of both the *gao* chapters of the *Documents* and that of the *Shijing* contains many features inconsistent with the early Western Zhou, but with similarities rather to that found in the eighth and seventh centuries BC and later.[7] Later in date but more conclusive from an evidentiary perspective, a series of manuscript finds confirms that many of the poems of the collection were known under more or less their current titles by around 300 BC. Texts likely dating from the fourth century BC refer to the song tradition as one of the elements of a traditional education (see, as Kern 42, suggests, *Mozi* 48.456). There is, however, no contemporary evidence to suggest that this educational use of the *Songs* reflected a closed canon (let alone that such a canon equaled our anthology). Moreover, most of the early quotations of poems from our text of the *Shijing* are fragmentary, citing only a line or two out of longer poems, and frequently deliberately against the grain of their interpretation, so that it is not always clear that the poems were assembled in the way ours are, let alone that those poems had anything like the meanings later readers inferred in them.

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[4] For the view that the Alexandrians greatly influenced our manuscript tradition of Homer, see Bolling 1925. For the opposing position, see Allen 1924.

[5] Burgess 2003, 183-7.

It seems likely that both Homeric epic and the *Shijing* also share a kind of transition from orality to writing, the precise details of which are unknowable in each case. As Finkelberg observes (22-3), the notion that the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* have their roots in a tradition of orally-performed poems is now generally accepted among Homerists, although there is still substantial disagreement as to how significant that oral tradition was, and concerning the date at which writing began to take over from composition-in-performance as the principal means for ensuring the transmission of the epic tradition. In the case of the *Shijing*, the role of orality is more contentious, with many suggesting that the poems we have are elite (and therefore, in this theory, presumptively literate) texts at most loosely inspired by an oral tradition.

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[6] Hunter 2017.

[7] Vogelsang 2004, 199.

This skepticism about orality notwithstanding, it is striking that references to the poems of the *Shijing* and quotations of them in the *Zuozhuan* and other texts are all but invariably delivered in an oral-performative context, whether sung by officials from rival states at a diplomatic meeting, or performed with song and dance as a spectacle for elite consumption (as in the famous case of the performance for prince Ji Zha of Wu, discussed by Kern 62-4). Moreover, as Kern has demonstrated elsewhere, archaeologically-recovered manuscripts of *Shijing* poems show such divergence in the characters they use to transcribe specific words that these manuscripts would have been all but impossible to interpret without the expert and oral teachings of a master.[8]

Even when written, then, these were texts that lived mostly, if not only, in recitation or performance. A venue such as the Panathenaic festival in Athens was not merely a site for the transmission of Homeric epic, but also a ritual context within which the meaning of the epics was grounded for their Athenian audience. The shared audience experience of the comedy and pathos, the rhetorical drama and the vivid narration, of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* will have increased the impact of the text. Likewise, the performances of the *Shijing* we hear about in the *Zuozhuan* and elsewhere (if indeed they reflect some kind of authentic tradition in general, let alone in detail) greatly enriched the significance of the poems there performed. Where (as with many of the *Airs*) the meaning and value of the poems might have been obscure in written form alone, the performance context would have grounded each of the poems in a political and cultural moment whose own significance lent luster to the poems themselves. It is tempting to speculate, in fact, that it was those poems that found the most life in performance that were the ones ultimately anthologized, although the process by which this anthologization happened is all but invisible to us.

In the context of a general dearth of evidence, mythological origins for both traditions flourished, providing another fruitful point of comparison. Margalit Finkelberg begins her essay (15-16) with a discussion of one of the key pieces of mythology surrounding Homeric epic: the so-called Pisistratean recension, by which the Athenian tyranny of the late sixth century BC (re-)assembled Homeric epic out of its dismembered fragments. Similarly, as Kern reminds us (39-40), there was a Chinese tradition (traceable from the Western Han) of attributing the editing of the *Shijing* to Confucius himself, though where the Pisistratean myth assembled disjointed fragments into a seamless whole, the Confucian one refines a corpus of three thousand poems, excluding duplicates and those not consistent with the virtues Confucius espoused, trimming the shapeless mass of tradition into a coherent collection of just over three hundred poem. This mythology of refinement and selection has its Greek analogue, perhaps, in the tradition of the Epic Cycle of poems on the Troy theme, poems that were attributed, in part, to figures around Homer, but that gradually ceded pride of place to our two Homeric epics. Later mythologies account for the survival of the *Shijing* during the great burning of the books by the First Emperor of the Qin (r. 221-210 BC), both in the minds of experts who had memorized the poems, and in the walls of Confucius' house.

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[8] Kern 2005.

These myths subtly account for the complex similarities and differences between Homeric epic and the *Shijing* as textual entities. Both are clearly composite works in a certain sense: the Homeric epics are a selection and combination of certain elements from the Epic Cycle's larger repertoire of stories, while the *Shijing* is similarly a selection and arrangement of poems from what we know must have been a larger and more diverse range of such poems. But the nature of these two textual assemblages is, of course, different: where the Homeric epics each provide a continuous narrative focused on the activities of a single individual (with a larger, but still limited, cast of supporting characters), the *Shijing* is a collection of three hundred comparatively short poems, only a small number of which offer any extensive narration, and are neither fitted together in an entirely coherent narrative sequence nor do they involve a fixed cast of characters. The assemblers of the *Shijing* thus had much greater freedom in their editorial activities than did the compilers of Homeric epic. It is perhaps appropriate, then, that while both traditions feature myths of compilation and editing, that task is comparatively foregrounded in the Chinese case (where the task is given great prominence and moral weight by being assigned to Confucius) as compared to the Greek. In fact, the Athenian recension of Homeric epic, even before the Pisistratids, is frequently seen as motivated by political purposes rather than by aesthetic or moral considerations, as when, in Diogenes Laertius' life of Solon (1.48) we are told that the verses in the *Catalogue of the Ships* that mention Athens were only added later. Episodes such as this certainly reinforce the notion (in Greek myth-making, if not in Greek reality) that the Homeric epics were the continuous works of a named individual, and that tampering with their selection and combination of events violated their integrity, while in the case of the *Shijing* it was the very act of editorial selection and arrangement which conferred integrity on the corpus.

Be that as it may, it is unlikely that either of these myths has a straightforward connection to any historical reality. The late sixth century establishment of Homeric recitation at the Panathenaic festival is very likely, as Finkelberg suggests (34-5), to have been a crucial stage in the transmission of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* from their origins to our times, but we have no certain way of knowing whether the Pisistratids actively assembled Homeric epic out of disparate elements (as the myth suggests) or merely sanctioned an already-existing corpus of texts. Likewise, Kern (passim) notes the persistent association of Confucius with the poems of the *Shijing* in a wide variety of ancient texts, while reminding us of how tenuous our evidence is for what these poems might have looked like in Confucius' time. Texts that quote the *Shijing* were mostly compiled in the fourth century BC or later, though some of the material they contain is attributed to the eighth century or earlier. In any case, the vast bulk of *Shijing* quotations in these texts (and nearly all of the quotations attributed to earlier times) are of only one or two lines of poetry, and never of more than one stanza. It is impossible, then (despite the efforts of the tradition to do just this), to extrapolate with any degree of certainty from the existence of these quotations in passages attributed to the eighth through fifth centuries, to any kind of persuasive theory about the forms in which those quotations might have been embedded at that time.

The question of authorship is problematic with respect to both Homeric epic and the *Shijing*, as both Kern's and Finkelberg's chapters demonstrate (and as I have discussed in my own way).[9] The mythologies of the Homeric tradition attribute the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* (and sometimes other poems in the Epic Cycle) to a single author: the mysterious Homer. Nearly everything the ancients said about Homer – his blindness, his conception in Smyrna, his death after failing to solve a riddle asked him by young fisher boys – can be read as a biographical inference from the texts of the poems, or as what I have called a "scene of authorship": an attempt to ground a theory about the production, circulation, or meaning of a text through a constructed biographical anecdote. Homer's blindness, for example, may be read either as an inference from the presence of the blind bard Demodocus in the *Odyssey* – or as a means of asserting that Homer himself did not use writing (a claim we find in those of the Homeric biographies that insist on Homer's blindness).[10]

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[9] Beecroft 2010.

In the case of the *Shijing*, virtually none of the poems has an internally-identified author, and the exceptions are problematic.[11] Moreover, the extensive commentarial tradition on the *Shijing* largely ignores questions of individual authorship, though it is obsessed with attaching as many of the poems as possible to specific historical moments, whether as created anonymously in response to a specific political context, or as re-performed to comment on the moment of its performance. I have argued that this represents a kind of "scene of authorship" that is distinct from the more familiar kind we encounter with Homer (and in much of the later tradition in both Europe and China), where the emphasis is on performance rather than composition as the authorizing moment for a text. As such, these poems were able to adapt to new circumstances and to be redeployed in new contexts.

But, in a broader sense, both Homeric epic and the *Shijing* are texts that must always be understood as framed by moments of assemblage, of redaction, and of commentary that likely long post-date the texts' earliest emergence. Finkelberg draws our attention, for example, to the role played both by the Pisistratean recension and by Hellenistic scholars in shaping the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* into the forms in which we know them today (15-18) (and she has elsewhere suggested the possible role of scholars in Constantinople after the division of the Roman empire in selecting from among the various Hellenistic traditions of text and interpretation).[12] In the case of the *Shijing*, the pressure exerted on modern readings by more than two thousand years of continuous commentarial practice is greater still. As Kern has observed, recent manuscript finds give us glimpses into what these poems might have meant before our commentarial traditions began, but our understanding of the poems of the *Shijing* prior to their anthologization, canonization, and embedding in commentary will always be limited and partial.[13] Indeed, for both Homer and the *Shijing*, we need to contend simultaneously with multiple interpretive frameworks successively imposed on the text, frameworks that determined criteria for inclusion, principles of editing, and habits of interpretation. Kern offers vivid examples of the startling ways in which the later Confucian tradition defined the poems of the *Shijing* through their practices of interpretation, where poems of seeming everyday banality are interpreted as political allegory in multiple ways. Examples of this practice are less dramatic when it comes to Homer. In part, this is because the lengthy narratives of each of the epics provide a less flexible context for interpretation; in part, it is a consequence of the decisions made by early modern and modern editors of Homer to transmit the epics without their accompanying baggage of scholia (whereas virtually every edition of the *Shijing* will include commentary, whether of the orthodox Mao school or that of a later individual editor). Indeed, many of the scholia to Homer have not yet been so much as edited and published. Nonetheless, we can see in those scholia evidence for various levels of interpretation and re-interpretation; as when, for example, the Hellenistic scholar Zenodotus seems to challenge the authenticity of *Iliad* 3.423-6, over the arguable impropriety of having Aphrodite fetch a chair for Helen. The scholia on the passage offer a lively series of refutations of this reading, pointing out that Aphrodite and Helen are after all half-sisters, and adducing precedents from elsewhere in the epic tradition. The specific example here may seem absurd: a pedantic fixation on imagined rules of conduct for the gods, insensitive to the complex realities of the rest of the epic tradition. This moment should, however, alert us to the problematic nature of any meditations on the propriety or otherwise of any episode in the epics, and to make us rethink where and how we arrived at our own assumptions about what should or should not be happening in Greek epic. A closer examination of the scholia may yet show that our habits of thought about Homer are more indebted to the ancient scholarly tradition than we realize.

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[10] Beecroft 2011.

[11] See, in addition to Kern's excellent discussion above, my own assessment in Beecroft 2014

[12] Finkelberg 2010.

Without downplaying the significance of the differences we have discussed, there is good reason to stress once again the similarities in the histories of our two textual traditions. Of particular importance, from a comparative perspective, is the fact that in neither case is the process transparent; we have the texts that have been transmitted to us, a few pieces of concrete evidence for their earlier transmission, some ideas about how the texts must have begun – and very little else, in either case. We have a "before" image of both traditions, of the shorter heroic songs that must underlie the massive epics of our tradition, and of the countless songs (hinted at by the tradition that Confucius knew three thousand of them, and testified to in the occasional quotations from songs not found in our *Shijing*) from which our anthology was ultimately selected. We have, of course, the "after" image as well: the consolidated textual traditions transmitted across the millennia to us. But, in both cases, we know disturbingly little about the intermediate stages. We see occasional flashes, whether in the quotation of texts that do or do not resemble our manuscript tradition for each, and even occasional moments of theorizing (or mythologizing) the process of transmission. But for many questions, our answers are, and will probably always be, speculative; and it is in those processes of speculation that we find much in common between the two traditions. Had the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* already definitively been established as written texts a century before Pisistratus, as many would still insist? Was the late sixth century in Athens the moment at which the textual tradition was consolidated, or was there still room for considerable flexibility for many years thereafter? Were there eras in which multiple competing manuscript editions of the epics existed, and how significant would the differences between those editions have been? In what historical epoch did consumers of Homeric epic begin to imagine the poems primarily as written artifacts, perhaps declaimed by specialists, rather than chiefly as a performance practice?

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[13] Kern 2008.

In the case of the *Shijing*, at what point did the canon of songs that was to become the *Canon of Songs* become closed, and how late was it possible for an individual song to be added to, or removed from, the canon? For that matter, did the couplets we often see quoted in early texts lead a life autonomous from the poems in which we now find them, or was the internal content of each poem fixed, and at what date? When did those who knew the *Shi* begin to think of them not just as a closed canon, but as an anthology with its own internal structure of four main parts, and its own fixed sequence of poems? Were the *Airs of the States* actually connected with their regions of claimed origin, and by what process did those poems come to be associated with the regional states? When and how did the poems acquire written form, and how, where and when was that form standardized? It would be an exaggeration to say that we have no information at all which contributes to a concrete understanding of the answers to these questions, and Finkelberg and Kern each offer careful and thorough presentations of such information as we do possess, and of which of these questions are answerable (or may become answerable over time), and to what degree. Both are also suitably modest in offering theories where evidence is lacking. Both also, I would suggest, point at ways in which the speculation about one tradition might helpfully inform the other, as when Kern (67-8) points to the degree to which commentary necessarily mediates our reading of the *Shijing*, inviting us to consider whether the same might be the case with Homeric epic. Where Finkelberg (24) considers the possibility that the sixth century BC Athenian context and its own political demands may lead to downplaying the myth of the End of Heroes in our *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, I would invite the reader to consider the political dynamics at play in late Warring States and Western Han-era China, and the extent to which those dynamics may also have shaped our version of the *Shijing*. Comparison in these cases will not bring certainty, but in matters where conclusive evidence is wanting, it may provide useful illumination.

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HOMERIC SCHOLARSHIP IN ITS FORMATIVE STAGES[*]

Barbara GRAZIOSI

This chapter investigates the early history of Homeric scholarship, focusing on the period between the sixth century BCE, when we can detect the first traces of scholarly interest in the Homeric texts, to the second century BCE, when Aristarchus of Samothrace produced the most influential ancient 'editions' (more on that term below) of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. The sections in this chapter are arranged in broad chronological order, even though interest in specific issues – such as Homeric characterization or, to quote a more trivial example, Nestor's ability to lift his golden cup – can be traced through the centuries. There are, as will soon emerge, uncertainties and disagreements about the status of Homeric texts in this period (and the extent to which scholarship contributed to shaping them), and it therefore seems important to start with what we know beyond doubt about the early reception of Homeric epic, including its textual status (section one), before moving on to early theological and political debates (sections two and three), competing claims to Homeric expertise in the fifth and fourth centuries BCE (section four), and finally Hellenistic textual and literary scholarship (sections five and six). The point of the exercise is to trace significant continuities, as well as new developments, in the Homeric tradition, in order to enable comparison with the different and equally influential scholarly tradition that shaped, and in turn developed around, the Chinese *Book of Songs.* What the payoff of such comparison might be, is an issue that I begin to address in the conclusion to this piece, and that is more fully addressed in the comparative commentary on this and the corresponding chapter on the Chinese *Book of Songs*, and in the volume as a whole.

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[*] I would like to thank Fritz-Heiner Mutschler for organizing a truly stimulating conference in Beijing, and for his acute feedback, and patience, in the process of turning an oral paper into a written chapter. I would also like to thank colleagues there for their comments on my work: it was particularly useful to engage with sinologist perspectives on issues of authorship and canon formation.

I. Early Texts

All agree that Homeric epic stems from a rich and ancient tradition of oral poetry. Its language and compositional techniques were honed over a long period of time, and developed for the purpose of singing the deeds of gods and men to a particular rhythm, what we call the hexameter 'line'. The second point on which there is broad agreement is that, by the second half of the sixth century BCE, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* were well known. The best evidence for this is the material record: whereas eighth- and seventh-century vases are inspired by rather general epic themes, from the second half of the sixth century onwards we get much more precise references to our *Iliad* and *Odyssey*.[1] At this time, we also find the earliest extant attribution to Homer. Simonides of Ceos singles out line 146 of *Iliad* 6, and calls it 'the finest thing the Chian man said'.[2] We also know that Theagenes – a scholar from Rhegium in the south of Italy – was writing about Homer in the late sixth century BCE. As Cassio argues in an outstanding article on the early texts of Homer, the fact that there were written disquisitions about Homeric epic in the late sixth century suggests that there must also have been written versions of the poems themselves by about 530-520 BCE at the latest.[3] This is important: the likely circulation of written texts, and a definite biographical interest in the figure of Homer can be documented for roughly the same period. Both phenomena, however, must have been parasitic on the popularity of Homeric epic in performance.

As I have argued elsewhere, itinerant performers named rhapsodes must have found it useful to use the name of the poet Homer, as a guarantee for their performances.[4] Once they started advocating the absent author, audiences will have asked questions about him; and the earliest biographical traditions developed in order satisfy their curiosity. Often, the rhapsodes presented Homer as himself a traveler who depended on the good will and hospitality of local audiences: it is not difficult to see how this specific image of the poet served the rhapsodes' own needs.[5] Appeals to Homer could help the rhapsodes also in other ways. Once the poet's reputation was established, and he was considered the poet 'from whom everybody learned since the beginning of time' (as Xenophanes put it in the sixth century BCE, fr. 10 DK), his name could be used to advertise many different poems and performances. This helps to explain how it is that in the archaic period a vast number of poems were attributed to Homer – not just the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, but the *Homeric Hymns*, and poems belonging to the Trojan and Theban Cycles. In terms of language, it seems that these other poems reached a state of fixation after the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, or at any rate displayed less archaic features, so we can imagine a scenario in which the number of poems attributed to Homer grew together with his fame.[6]

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[1] The visual evidence for Iliadic scenes is collected and discussed in Burgess 2001, 53-94.

[2] See Graziosi and Haubold 2010, 146n.

[3] Cassio 2002, 118-19.

The famous and controversial issue of an archaic Athenian 'recension' of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* needs to be considered in relation to the picture that has already emerged. According to some sources, the tyrant Pisistratus, or one of his sons, decreed that 'Homer only' had to be recited, 'in the correct order', at the most important religious festival in Athens: the Panathenaea.[7] Those reports do not speak of a state-owned text, but rather refer to a situation in which the state monitored the performance of Homeric poetry, and showed concern that Homer's *oeuvre* might be augmented or jumbled up ('Homer only' and 'in the correct order'). Only much later sources, from Cicero onwards, speak of proper philological work on the *Iliad* under the patronage of Pisistratus that led to a first edition. There is no doubt that those reports actually reflect what happened in Alexandria in the third and second centuries BCE; they even present Pisistratus as assembling a group of seventy-two philologists for the purposes of establishing the first critical edition of the *Iliad*, an anecdote to which I return at the end of this chapter. For now, it is important to sound a word of caution concerning the so-called 'Pisistratean recension'.

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[4] Graziosi 2002.

[5] See further Graziosi 2002, 21-40.

[6] For a relative chronology of early epic poems on the basis of their language, see Janko 1982.

[7] Collected and discussed in Kotsidu 1991, 41-4.

There is no doubt that performances at the Panathenaea – and, we can safely assume, associated scripts – were an important factor in the survival and transmission of Homeric epic, but the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* were never Athenian poems – neither in conception nor in exclusive use. Skafte Jensen, among others, argues that 'the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* were dictated and written at the court of Pisistratus' and pinpoints this one context as the origin of the poems we have today.[8] Several modern scholars disagree with this assessment and, more to the point, the ancient Athenians did too. They believed that the Homeric poems originated in Ionia, i.e. the coast of Asia Minor, and had been brought to Athens from Chios by the Homeridae, rhapsodes who claimed direct descent from Homer. This account belongs to the mythical biography of the poet, but it does suggest a very real and concrete fact: that the Athenians did not feel they owned the Homeric poems, but rather insisted that they had received them from elsewhere.[9] It also suggests that the Homeridae, at least, were historical figures, no matter how shady their links to their ancestor 'Homer'.[10] The language of Homeric epic, which is predominantly Ionic with an important Aeolic component, confirms that the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* originated on the coast of Asia Minor, and that epic performers traveled from there to other parts of the Greek-speaking world, spreading knowledge of the poems. Ancient traditions about the identity of Homer thus tally with linguistic arguments about the Ionian origin of the poems attributed to him: apart from Chios, ancient sources mention other possible birthplaces for Homer on the coast of Asia Minor, including Smyrna and Aeolian Cyme. For all that the Homeridae asserted direct descent from Homer, it is not possible to pinpoint a specific place of birth for Homeric epic: all we can say is that it originated on the coast of what is now western Turkey.

There is another detail to consider when assessing the influence of Athens on establishing the first texts of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. The earliest authors known to have discussed the Homeric poems are Xenophanes of Colophon, Theagenes of Rhegium, Heraclitus of Ephesus, and Simonides of Ceos (all of them active in the sixth to early fifth centuries BCE); none of them was Athenian. In fact, they originate from the most far-flung corners of the Greek-speaking world. They must have known the poems from performance, but given that Theagenes wrote about Homer, it seems sensible to assume that he had texts or scripts of the poems, as well as his own work on them.

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[8] Skafte Jensen 1980, 159.

[9] Graziosi 2002, 201-34.

[10] Graziosi 2002, chap. 1, contra Fehling 1979.

A general picture can be sketched out along the following lines. In the sixth century, Homeric epic was well known throughout the ancient Greek world, from the coast of Ionia to the south of Italy. Artists and poets were reacting to specific scenes, episodes, and even lines of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, as we know them from the texts that have reached us. Homeric performances must have been popular, given how widespread the engagement with the poems was. Performances at the Panathenaea in Athens are the best documented and seem to have been especially influential – not least judging from a light Attic veneer that applies to the written form of the poems as we now have them (particularly on issues of spelling, rather than morphology).[11] The influence of Athens on the transmission of Homeric epic is not surprising, especially given the prominence of the city from the sixth century onwards. Still, the poems were never meant exclusively for Athenian audiences. The Great Panathenaic festival was, in fact, timed and programmed so as to try to rival the Olympics, where we know that Homeric epic was also performed: the ambition was to please visitors as well as local audiences. Just as there were Athenian scripts, there will have been other texts serving different cities and communities. Even if most of our information comes from Athens, we know enough to reconstruct that the poems originated in Ionia, and that traveling rhapsodes performed them throughout the ancient Greek world. It is also likely that written versions or scripts were never confined to Athens.

II. Theological Criticism and the Origins of Allegorical Interpretation

As well as performing the poems, rhapsodes must have inspired and participated in debates about the meaning and interpretation of Homeric epic. Our earliest evidence comes from the work of Xenophanes and Theagenes. Xenophanes – our earliest author to mention Homer by name – attacked his poetry from a theological perspective. He was particularly exercised by Homer's anthropomorphic visions of the gods, claiming that they were too specific to command universal respect: 'the Thracians think that the gods are red-haired and blue-eyed', he claimed, 'the Ethiopians that they are snub-nosed and black' (fr. 16 DK). In a polemical flourish, he added (fr. 15 DK):

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[11] Chantraine 1948, 15-16; Cassio 2002, 117 with n. 55.

> If cattle and horses and lions had hands, and could paint
> with their hands and accomplish works like men,
> horses would paint the gods in the image of horses, cattle of cattle,
> and they would each shape the bodies of gods in the shape of their own.

Xenophanes was not interested in the actual views of Thracians or Ethiopians. He mentioned them because they featured in Homer: at the beginning of the *Iliad*, the Olympian gods are said to be visiting the Ethiopians; and later on in the poem, Zeus observes the Thracians from Mt. Ida.[12] So it made sense for Xenophanes to ask what these distant people made of Zeus, and whether he resembled them. Xenophanes also had other objections against the gods of epic (fr. 11 DK):

> Homer and Hesiod ascribed to the gods every action
> that causes shame and reproach among human beings:
> theft, adultery, and cheating each other.

True divinity was quite different, in Xenophanes' view. He argued that there must be 'one god, the greatest among gods and men, not at all like mortals in appearance or thought' (fr. 23 DK) – a statement that has been much discussed, because it suggests monotheism to some readers, while allowing for a multiplicity of lesser gods according to other interpreters.[13] I need not go into detail here, except to observe one thing: Xenophanes' very obsession with Homer indicates that he took him seriously as an authority. Homeric poetry offered the materials against which Xenophanes sharpened his own thinking. Others, in turn, took sides with Homer and argued against the kind of criticism Xenophanes voiced. And here, already in the archaic period, we begin to see that the Homeric poems could not be so easily dismissed, and already inspired apologetic criticism.

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[12] *Iliad* 1.423 and 13.4.

[13] See further Parker 1986 and Broadie 1999.

Theagenes of Rhegium issued a defense of the Homeric gods that was meant precisely to protect them from charges of anthropomorphism and immorality. At first sight, it seems unlikely that Theagenes was responding directly to Xenophanes; the two men lived more than 600 miles apart, as the crow flies. And yet, they both knew Homeric epic well, and their own work will have traveled along epic routes: we can imagine itinerant rhapsodes, public performances, and ensuing discussions about the nature of the gods. Whatever the exact relationship between Xenophanes and Theagenes, we must conclude that ideas spread fast across the ancient Mediterranean, and that the nature of the Homeric gods was a major concern indeed in the archaic period.

Of Theagenes' writings we know even less than about Xenophanes' poems. What remains of his work comes largely from marginal notes found in some medieval manuscripts, known as 'scholia'. The longest we have concerns the battle of the gods in books 20 and 21 of the *Iliad* (fr. 2 DK). It starts by admitting that some readers find it 'unseemly' that the gods should fight each other, but that, according to others, the Olympians should be interpreted allegorically, 'on the basis of the form of expression used' (whatever that means exactly).[14] The note goes on to describe the gods as physical or psychological entities: for example, Poseidon (water) fights against Apollo (fire). All this sounds rather late, on first hearing, but in fact our note ends with a surprising flourish: 'This form of defense is very old, and goes back to Theagenes of Rhegium, the first man who wrote about Homer.'

It is hard to assess this claim, for the author of the note, Theagenes, is clearly little more than a name, a convenient 'first inventor' of a kind of interpretation that developed over centuries, and proved convenient for moralizing lovers of epic. Whether Theagenes actually interpreted the battle of the gods precisely along the lines suggested is doubtful, since, for one thing, the identification of Apollo with fire must be considerably later than the sixth century BCE. All we can do, by way of reconstructing Theagenes' arguments, is consider what was going on shortly before his time, what happened shortly after him, and then place him somewhere along that continuum.

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[14] Feeney 1991, 9 offers a good discussion of 'on the basis of the form of expression used'.

We know that interpreters of Homer who worked about a century after Theagenes offered full-blown allegorical interpretations of the Olympian gods: they did not call them 'allegories' yet (their technical term was *hyponoiai*, 'under-thoughts'), but clearly allegories is what they were.[15] Metrodorus of Lampsacus, for example, argued in a treatise *About Homer* that 'neither Hera nor Athena nor Zeus are that which people think they are when they establish their sacred sanctuaries, but are the substances of nature and arrangements of the elements'.[16] I offer a reading of his work in section four of this article. Punning interpretations of divine names, on the other hand, already feature in the Homeric poems themselves. In the *Iliad*, for example, we read that Hera spreads a thick mist, *êera*, to protect her beloved Greeks – and that pun inspired the very consistent identification of Hera with air through the centuries.[17] Theagenes may have done little more than tease out some of the implications of these Homeric word-games in order to suggest that the Olympian gods were not what they seemed to be and that, as a result, charges of immorality did not apply to them. After all, Hera – as air – could hardly be faulted for her behavior. We must then place Theagenes somewhere along a line that starts with the punning explanations of the gods in Homeric epic itself and eventually develops into the full-blown allegorical interpretations of Metrodorus and other thinkers working in the classical period.

Now, for the purposes of investigating early philological receptions of Homer, we can conclude from this long-distance dialogue between Xenophanes and Theagenes that in the sixth century Homeric epic was not just widely known, but authoritative. Critics felt they could attack or defend it – but not simply re-write it to suit their theological views. It seems, moreover, that details of the text (such as puns and etymological figures) were crystallizing into traditions of criticism.

III. Early Political Interpretations and Interpolations

That rhapsodes could not simply re-compose the Homeric poems in order to please themselves or their audiences emerges also from other considerations. Herodotus (fifth century BCE) reports that a sixth-century tyrant from Sicyon, Cleisthenes, banned the rhapsodes from performing the Homeric poems, because they celebrated the enemy city of Argos.[18] As Nagy points out, the rhapsodes are not envisaged in this report as able to change their repertoire or modify Homer so as to avoid reference to Argos and the Argives – a tyrant could, at most, prevent them from performing altogether.[19] The story tallies with what we know about Homeric performances at the Panathenaea. There, the tyrants invited the rhapsodes to perform and gave them considerable institutional support for their work, but did so in order to promote the Panhellenic dimension of their festival, rather than contentious local interests.[20] The authority of Homer, in other words, was not confined to a specific city-state, be it Athens or Argos.

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[15] See further Richardson 1975.

[16] Fr. A4 DK (a summary offered by Philodemus in the second century CE).

[17] *Iliad* 21.6-7. For etymologizing puns in Homer, see Rank 1952.

There is one specific piece of evidence that suggests that the Athenians were not at liberty to tamper with the Homeric poems in order to suit their own political aims.[21] In the *Rhetoric*, Aristotle (384-323 BCE) tells us that, in the archaic period, the Athenians used 'Homer' as a witness in their dispute against Megara over possession of the island of Salamis:

> There are two types of witnesses, ancient and contemporary; of the latter, some take part in the trial, the others do not. By ancient witnesses I mean the poets and any other well-known authorities whose judgements are famous; for example, the Athenians used Homer as a witness concerning Salamis.
>
> (Aristotle, *Rhetoric* 1375b26-30)

The story refers to one line from the *Iliad* that, a number of other sources tell us,[22] was used by the Athenians, and more particularly Solon or Pisistratus, in order to stake a claim on Salamis: we are told that Ajax led twelve ships from Salamis, and that 'he beached them next to the Athenian troops' (*Iliad* 2.558). The argument was that, because the Salaminian contingent was placed next to the Athenian at the time of the Trojan expedition, the island must have belonged to Athens in the distant past. This usage of one line from the 'Catalogue of Ships' on the part of the Athenians actually confirms that Homer was thought to be an impartial poet whose account of the past could settle international disputes. It would not have been persuasive to appeal, say, to an Athenian poet to buttress an Athenian claim on Salamis. The Megarians were expected to respect the authority of Homer's poetry just as much as the Athenians did. In the event, as we learn from various sources, they refused to accept the argument based on *Iliad* 2.558, but they did not thereby challenge Homer's authority. Rather, they claimed that the Athenians had forged that particular line, and added it to the 'Catalogue of Ships' in *Iliad* 2 in order to justify their expansionistic claims.

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[18] Herodotus, 5.67.1.

[19] Nagy 1989, 16.

[20] Graziosi 2002, chap. 5.

[21] Ritoók 1993 offers an excellent analysis of the sources that discuss the political uses of the Homeric poems in connection with their canonization.

[22] See, for example, Schol. b *ad Il.* 2.558; Schol. A *ad Il.* 3.230; Quintilian 5.11.40.

These accusations were taken seriously in antiquity. It is worth noting that the work of Megarian authors is almost entirely lost, except for their comments about the alleged Athenian manipulation of the *Iliad*.[23] These are preserved and publicized by a plurality of sources, and were taken seriously by the Alexandrian scholars who worked on the Homeric texts. Aristarchus cast doubt on line 2.558, obviously thinking that it was an Athenian fabrication. The line is also left out in some papyri, and is considered spurious by some modern editors too.[24]

The story about the Athenian use of *Iliad* 2.557f. and the Megarian accusations of forgery lead to three conclusions. In the first place, it shows that the Homeric poems, and the *Catalogue of Ships* in particular, were considered objective and unbiased, equidistant from all possible local audiences. Secondly, when a ruler 'took the poems to his city', certain anxieties and suspicions could arise. Finally, it seems significant that Megarian accusations focused on very few lines: the Athenians were not accused of rewriting and adapting large sections of the poems, but only of sneaking an extra line into the 'Catalogue of Ships'. Even small-scale forgeries, however, were a serious matter: otherwise obscure Megarian historians left their mark, and are still remembered today, because they questioned the authenticity of a single line in Homer.

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[23] For a full discussion, see Piccirilli 1975, 30-6.

[24] See Kirk 1985 *ad* 2.558. Some editors print the line, for example, Allen; others treat it as interpolated: Dindorf and Hentze; Willcock; M. L. West.

IV. Homeric Expertise

From the fifth century BCE at the latest, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* were taught in school, and students were expected to explain obscure Homeric expressions. In a fragment of a lost comedy, Aristophanes (ca. 446–386 BCE) has a father interrogate his son about the meaning of difficult Homeric words, very much in the style of a school master: 'Now tell me in addition, what is the meaning of 'forepoints' (κάρηνα), then what is meant by 'strengthless heads' (ἀμενηνὰ κάρηνα)?'.[25] As it happens, the boy in question manages to deflect the question to his brother, a good comic moment. There is also evidence of interest in Homeric morphology and grammar in the classical period. It seems, for example, that Democritus (ca. 460 – 370 BCE) occupied himself with Homeric word division (fr. 22 DK). For his part, the sophist Protagoras (ca. 490 – 420 BCE) is said to have been the first to categorize nouns as masculine, feminine and neuter (fr. A27 DK), and to have illustrated his theory by complaining that the first word of the *Iliad* contained a 'mistake', since μῆνις (wrath) was grammatically feminine, yet virile in meaning (fr. A 28 DK). Protagoras also divided propositions into questions, answers, prayers and commands (fr. A 1 DK), and again criticized Homer for starting the *Iliad* with an order, rather than a prayer, to the Muse (fr. A 29 DK). What we see here is the beginning of a systematic approach to the study of language and literature, together with a display of one-upmanship vis-à-vis Homer, the ultimate authority.

The systematic study of Homeric epic in school, and the attempt to explain and criticize it by developing new theories about language, led to mounting competition between traditional performers of epic and a new breed of Homeric experts. In one of his dialogues, Plato (420s – 348/7 BCE) depicts a boastful rhapsode called Ion making grand claims about his own competence:

> I think that I am the best exponent of Homer, and neither Metrodorus of Lampsacus nor Stesimbrotus of Thasos nor Glaucon, nor anyone else in the past has ever been able to express so many fine thoughts about Homer as I can.
>
> (Plato, *Ion* 530c-d)

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[25] Aristophanes, fr. 233 *PCG*, cf. *Il.* 9.241 (κόρυμβα) and *Od.* 10.521, 529 and 11.29, 49 (ἀμενηνὰ κάρηνα).

Some evidence survives about the shadowy figures mentioned by Ion and their Homeric expertise. Dates are uncertain for all of them, but they must have been active in the fifth and/or fourth century BCE. As I already mentioned, Metrodorus is best known for his allegorical interpretation of the *Iliad*. He used the main characters in order to illustrate a specific view of the cosmos, identifying Helen with the earth at the center of the poem/universe, Paris as the air embracing the earth/Helen, Achilles and Hector as the sun and the moon circling around the earth, etc.; meanwhile he dealt with the gods by making them stand for parts of the human body – Demeter as the liver, Dionysus as the spleen, Apollo as bile (frs. A 3-4 DK). His work may have been motivated by a desire to illustrate specific theories by reference to well-known texts, rather than an apologetic attempt to interpret Homer allegorically. In any case, we know that as well as offering a grand interpretation of the *Iliad*, he was also interested in specific words and passages (fr. A 5 DK), such as the meaning of πλέων at *Il.* 10.252f., an issue that also occupied Aristotle (*Poetics* 1461a25).[26]

Stesimbrotus of Thasos, the second expert mentioned by Ion, also had a wide range of interests. We know that he thought that Homer was a Smyrnaean (*FGrHist* 107 F 22), and that he discussed at least two Homeric problems (*FGrHist* 107 F 23 and 24): how come the decrepit Nestor could easily lift his golden cup, a cup so heavy that 'somebody else would have struggled to get it off the table' (*Il.* 11.636); and how come 'everything' in the universe was divided up between three gods (*Il.* 15.189), yet 'earth and tall Olympus' were still 'held in common to all' (*Il.* 15.193). Stesimbrotus also had a more general interest in the gods and in mystery cults – a combination that reminded Jacoby of Orphic traditions of exegesis (which were characterized by a mixture of what we would now call philology, etymology, allegory, and biography). Plato associates Stesimbrotus with an interest in Homeric *hyponoiai*, literally 'under-thoughts' (*Ion* 530b), but we cannot know what kinds of under-thoughts he saw in the poems. It would not be surprising if he engaged in what we would now call allegory, even though there is no conclusive evidence for this.[27] Stesimbrotus' philological interests, at any rate, find some confirmation in the report that he taught Antimachus of Colophon (fourth/third century

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[26] For attribution of the view that πλέων can mean 'full' as well as 'more' to Metrodorus of Lampsacus, see further Richardson 1975, 68.

[27] See further Richardson 1975, 72-4.

BCE), the first named 'editor' of the Homeric poems, on whom more below in section five (*FGrHist* 107 T 5). As for Glaucon, the last Homeric expert mentioned by Ion, it seems he established a sound principle of literary criticism, namely that readers should not interpret poetry so as to make it sound contradictory, and then complain about what is in fact a fault in their own interpretation, not the text itself (Glaucon as quoted by Aristotle, *Poetics* 1461a35-b3). We may have one concrete example of how Glaucon followed his own principle in an extant solution to the problem of Nestor's cup. According to a 'Glaucus' mentioned in a late source (quite possibly the same man), the reason why Nestor alone could lift his golden cup without strain was not that he was stronger than his younger contemporaries, but that he had a knack for how to do it, holding both handles across the cup's diameter (Porphyry, *Homeric Questions* on *Iliad* 11.637, third century CE).

What we need to imagine, then, is a situation in which many different intellectual enterprises grew in dialogue with Homeric poetry, while a variety of experts sought to establish their own credentials with reference to Homer as an ancient predecessor.[28] This process helped to reinforce the authority of Homeric epic, while simultaneously establishing that of its new interpreters. So, for example, Metrodorus explained the universe by reference to the plot of the *Iliad*, and at the same time revealed the ancient poem as a representation of cosmic truth. Whether the emphasis was on allegorizing Homer, or rather on using Homer to illustrate a novel theory is hard to tell, but clearly both aspects of the operation were important to Metrodorus. Homeric experts of different sorts, ranging from rhapsodes, to natural philosophers, to teachers of rhetoric, vied with each other to establish their interpretations of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, and thereby promote their own theories. It is against this effervescent background that Plato launched his frontal attack on poetry in general, and Homeric epic in particular. Part of his criticism was theological (he objected, like many others before and after him, to Homeric representations of the gods), some of it was ontological (he dismissed poetry as an imitation of reality, itself an imitation of the Forms), and some homed in on the various different people who claimed Homeric expertise.

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[28] This is the kind of situation that also produced the *Certamen Homeri et Hesiodi*, where we can discern both an awareness of the challenges faced by rhapsodes in performance and sophistic influences. See Graziosi 2001.

This latter concern is especially obvious in the *Ion*, a dialogue in which Socrates asks the rhapsode Ion to define his area of expertise. Ion begins by arguing that knowledge of Homer makes him an expert in every field – and this position tallies with the picture I have already outlined: Homer was used to elucidate all sorts of different areas of knowledge (from nature, to religion, to language and literature). When put under pressure, however, Ion retreats to the position that Homer teaches generalship and also (more plausibly), 'how a man speaks, as well as the kind of thing a woman might say, or a slave, or a freeman, or someone receiving orders, or someone giving them' (*Ion* 540b). In the end, this ability to imitate is dismissed as something that requires no knowledge whatsoever. Ion, Socrates concludes, possesses no expertise at all; his Homeric credentials depend purely on divine inspiration.

This conclusion did not persuade everyone. Aristotle, for one, returned to the issue of Homeric expertise in his *Poetics*. He insisted that poetry needed to be judged against the aim of poetry, and not according to some other criterion (such as conformity to particular theories of language, science, statesmanship, or whatever else). This approach helped him to tackle issues of Homeric interpretation that were, in his time, already well known. The problem of the gods was, as has already emerged, the most ancient and profound. Aristotle accepted Plato's understanding of poetry as imitation of reality, and went on to admit that Homeric depictions of the gods seemed neither true nor plausible; indeed, Xenophanes was probably right about them (*Poetics* 1460b32-7). Still he suggested that they should be considered in relation to the main aim of poetry, namely that of 'effecting, through pity and fear, the catharsis of those emotions' (*Poetics* 1449b27f.). He concluded that it was a mistake to portray something impossible, but – depending on its aim and effect – it was an error that could be explained, and even justified:

> If something impossible has been portrayed, that is an error. But it is justifiable if the poet thus achieves the aim of poetry (what that aim is has been already stated) and makes that part or some other part of the poem more thrilling.
>
> (Aristotle, *Poetics* 1460b23-6)

The gods in epic, then, become acceptable because they are thrilling.[29] In Aristotle's *Poetics*, similar considerations apply to more trivial examples, such as the depiction of a horse 'with its two right legs simultaneously forward' (*Poetics* 1460b18f.). Such a depiction does not conform to how horses actually move (according to Aristotle), and yet can be justified if it conveys the liveliness of its movement. The interpretation of poetry depends, then, on the recognition of the poet's aim and intent:

> Correct standards in poetry are not identical with those in politics or in any other particular art. Two kinds of failure are possible in poetry – one intrinsic, and the other contingent. If a poet lacks the capacity to achieve what he sets out to portray, the failure is one of poetic art. But this is not so if the poet intends to portray something which is erroneous, such as a horse with its two right legs simultaneously forward, or something which is a technical mistake in medicine or any other field. So, it is from these premises that the solutions to the charges contained in problems must be found.
>
> (Aristotle, *Poetics* 1460b13-22)

This statement of principle informs all the specific Homeric 'problems' to which Aristotle offers 'solutions' in chapter 25 of the *Poetics*, and must also have guided a much larger work of interpretation entitled *Homeric Problems*, which now survives only in fragments.[30]

The issue now becomes how to recognize the poet's intent. Here Aristotle offers no straightforward method – indeed he suggests that particular issues must be judged either against 'what the poet says himself, or what a sensible man can assume' (*Poetics* 1461b18, πρὸς ἃ αὐτὸς λέγει ἢ ὃ ἂν φρόνιμος ὑποθῆται). The need for a sensible man, or expert, is particularly urgent in the case of good poetry, i.e. poetry that does not amount to a straightforward utterance or direct instruction on the part of the poet, but rather imitates people other than the poet himself. Homer, it turns out, deserves special praise precisely because he does not talk at length in his own person, but rather gives space to his characters:

> Homer deserves praise for many things and especially for this, that alone of all poets he does not fail to understand what he ought to do

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[29] See further Feeney 1991, chap. 1; Graziosi 2013, chap. 6.

[30] For a selection of fragments in translation, see Barnes 1984, 2431-3.

> himself. The poet should speak as seldom as possible in his own character, since he is not representing the story in that sense. Now the other poets play a part themselves throughout the poem and only occasionally imitate a few things, but Homer after a brief prelude at once brings in a man or a woman or some other figure, never without individuality, but all having a character of their own.
>
> (Aristotle, *Poetics* 1460a)

Both the focus on the poet's intention, and the distinction between the poet's voice and those of his characters become important principles in later Homeric scholarship.

V. Alexandrian Texts

What exactly happened to the Homeric poems after the conquests of Alexander the Great, and the establishment of a new library in Alexandria, Lower Egypt, is at least as contested as the early history of the poems. Again, it might be useful to start by setting out the few points on which there is general agreement. Scholars working in the library of Alexandria in the third and second centuries BCE collected earlier texts of Homer. It seems that some of these were categorized 'by city', κατὰ πόλεις, others 'by man', κατ' ἄνδρα.[31] The former may have been official texts or scores preserved locally for performance at specific civic festivals, such as the Panathenaea. Among the texts categorized 'by man' (i.e. containing the annotations of individual scholars), that of Antimachus of Colophon, active in the fifth century BCE, seems to have been particularly influential. What remains unclear, and hotly contested, is to what extent the scholars working in the Alexandrian library reported on variants found in those earlier texts, and whether they added conjectures of their own.

Zenodotus of Ephesus, who worked in the library in the third century BCE, is the first Alexandrian scholar credited with an 'edition' (ἔκδοσις) of Homer. What we do not know is the precise nature of such a work. There seem to be two main possibilities: that Zenodotus annotated an already existing text of Homer, which he selected from among those available to him in the library; or that he produced a full text of his own, i.e. a new copy reflecting his views about the correct text from first line to last. Current opinion, shared by Pfeiffer, Nickau, Montanari, and several others (myself included), is very much tilted in favor of the first scenario. By 'edition' we should probably understand an already existing base text annotated by Zenodotus, rather than a new copy containing the entire text as established by him.[32] What remains unclear, however, is how exactly Zenodotus annotated his copy and, in particular, whether the alternative readings he suggested were his own conjectures, or were based on other copies he consulted. On the whole, it seems that Zenodotus was quite radical and idiosyncratic in his interventions, though this impression may be amplified through the process of transmission;: the readings that we can still attribute to him are often those against which the more cautious Aristarchus rebelled. Apart from Zenodotus' attempts to improve the text by suggesting alternative readings, he seems to have been quick to eliminate lines he did not consider authentic. The scholia sometimes report that, in Zenodotus' edition, a particular line 'is not there' (οὐκ εἶναι).[33] This is an expression that is not generally used to describe the work of later Alexandrian scholars. In the case of Aristophanes of Byzantium and Aristarchus of Samothrace, the scholia usually report that they doubt a particular line by placing a long dash (*obêlos*) next to it, not that they remove it altogether. As Montanari points out, 'the fact that the drastic step of material cancellation was abandoned provides a vivid illustration of the greater sense of prudence that was now felt, and helps us understand how it happened that many lines "eliminated" by Zenodotus were "restored" (i.e. no longer cancelled) in the text, and thus were not obliterated.'[34]

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[31] See Pfeiffer 1968, 93-5.

Aristophanes of Byzantium, a pupil of Zenodotus, seems to have displayed greater caution in his approach to the Homeric text, but in material terms his edition must have been similar to that of his predecessor: a carefully annotated text, based on an existing copy. It was Aristarchus of Samothrace who introduced an important innovation in terms of format: the *hypomnêma*, or extended lemmatic commentary. Whether Aristarchus wrote one or more *hypomnêmata* on Homer, and how such commentary/commentaries related to one or two possible editions attributed to him, as well as monographs on specific Homeric subjects (such as the arrangement of beached ships in the *Iliad*) is far harder to establish. Schol. A *ad Il.* 2.133 explicitly says that Aristarchus commented on the *ekdosis* produced by his predecessor Aristophanes, and this suggests that he may have begun to set out his views on Homer by producing a *hypomnêma* based on Aristophanes' text. Then there are also reports of one or two editions produced by Aristarchus himself, as well as, possibly, a second commentary. This is not the place to go into detail: however exactly we interpret the evidence, it seems safe to conclude that Aristarchus engaged closely with the work of his predecessors, as well as considering and reconsidering specific lines and problems himself, and sometimes changing his mind about them in the course of his life.

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[32] See Pfeiffer 1968, 110; Nickau 1977; Montanari 1998, 4.

[33] See Montanari 1998, 7.

[34] Montanari 1998, 9f.

Beyond the exact working practices of Aristarchus and the other scholars working in Alexandria, the larger interpretative problem concerns, as I have already mentioned, the status of the variant readings they report. Here there seems to be no consensus at all among modern scholars. Some consider them 'solutions' proposed by the Alexandrian scholars themselves in order to address what they perceived as problems in the received text (e.g. contradictions, or lapses of decorum). According to a different view, they represent genuine early variants found in earlier manuscripts. These different views have direct consequences for modern editions of the Homeric poems. Helmut van Thiel considers the variants reported in the scholia and the papyri to be mostly 'suggestions' of ancient scholars 'towards the improvement of the text, or … deliberations about it', and therefore grants them little authority in his editions of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.[35] In his Teubner edition of the *Iliad*, West, by contrast, gives more weight to attested variants, and sometimes privileges a weakly attested reading over the text preserved in the medieval manuscripts.[36] Unsurprisingly, these two different approaches have sparked a lively debate.[37] One important contributor to the debate, though not an editor himself, is Gregory Nagy, who argues that the Homeric text evolved over a long period of time, from a stage of relative fluidity in the Dark Age to one of relative stability in the late Hellenistic period.[38] Consequently, he advocates an inclusive approach to variant readings, which he broadly regards as equally valid oral realizations of a fluid Homeric 'multitext'.[39]

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[35] Van Thiel 1991, xxviii. For a broader statement of his editorial principles, see van Thiel 1991, xxi-xxxiii and 1996, III-XII.

[36] M. L. West 1998, V-XXXVII.

[37] M. L. West 2001 and 2004 with further bibliography.

[38] For example, Nagy 2004.

It seems to me that in assessing whether the scholars working in Alexandria reported on earlier variants or made conjectures of their own, we can rely only on scant and difficult evidence – evidence that can, moreover, be pressed into the service of several different models. Given the situation, it may make sense to take a bottom-up approach, and start by assessing variants on a case-by-case basis. Blanket statements that they are all equally valid oral realizations of a general script, or that they are all Hellenistic attempts to correct an already established text, simply do not allow for enough variation in variants – if the pun can be excused.

For illustrative purposes, I briefly consider here the attested variants for *Iliad* 6 (a random choice of sample determined by the practical and contingent reason that I have already worked on this portion of text). Almost all of them seem to me to answer Hellenistic concerns. Some seek to elucidate the text (4, 21, 31, 71, 76, 148, 226, 237, 241, 252, 266, 285, 321-2, 415); some attempt to make Homeric language more context specific (esp. 112); and some address perceived lapses of decorum (135 and 160). Only two seem to me to reflect the concerns of performers, since they reflect uncertainty about the exact tone and effect of two speeches (51 and 61).[40]

Despite many uncertainties, a general picture begins to emerge. Alexandrian scholars certainly worked on earlier texts, and it seems that in the course of time they became more cautious and conservative in their attempts to improve on them. Quite how varied and multiform the texts they consulted were we shall never know in detail, but some observations can be made on the basis of the scant evidence we still have. Quotations of Homer in classical authors display some divergences from the transmitted text of Homer that go beyond single words – but, it must be said, not much beyond single words. However, it is possible that quotations were checked against Homeric manuscripts, and thus began to conform to Hellenistic editions late in the history of transmission.[41] Another source of information is the papyri found in the sands of Egypt, or in mummy cartonnage, which contain snippets of Homeric epic. Here it is noticeable that early papyri display greater variance than later ones, so it does seem that scholarly work in the library of Alexandria helped to consolidate the text of the Homeric poems.[42] It must be said, however, that even the so-called ‘wild’ papyri, dating to the third and early second centuries, are not as wild as all that. They differ from the text preserved in the medieval manuscripts in some of their readings (‘horizontal variation’) and in the number of lines (‘vertical variation’), but once we consider that some of these papyri were school exercises (where mistakes are to be expected, after all) and others very learned scholarly productions (where again a degree of perversity can sometimes obtain), variation does not seem so surprising. Indeed, viewed from one perspective, it is the degree of conformity with the manuscript tradition that seems worthy of comment. Alexandrian scholars inherited a text of Homer that was considerably more stable than, say, the Asian *Mahabharata* traditions, or even other archaic Greek poems.[43] Their work further stabilized the text: we know, for example, that Aristarchus established the exact number of lines for the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, a number that still defines the texts today.[44]

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[39] See http://www.homermultitext.org/.

[40] See further Graziosi and Haubold 2010, 62n.

[41] For the early quotations of Homer, see Ludwich 1898; Allen 1924, 249-70; Haslam 1997, 74-7; Olson and Sens 1999, 13-15; Dué 2001. Labarbe 1949 collects and discusses Homeric quotations in Plato; cf. Lohse 1964, 1965,

VI. Alexandrian exegesis

The issues raised by Alexandrian editions of Homer are intimately connected with practices of interpretation, since variants are chosen or proposed, and verses retained or deleted, depending on specific notions of how the text should be. In the context of the discussion I can offer here, one principle deserves particular attention: the famous dictum ‘elucidate Homer from Homer’ (Ὅμηρον ἐξ Ὁμήρου σαφηνίζειν, Porphyry, *Homeric Questions* I 56.3-4). We can safely assume that the maxim reflects an important principle of Aristarchus, whether or not the precise wording can also be ascribed to him.[45] The principle seems

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1967. For an up-to-date collection of references, see M. L. West’s edition of the *Iliad*.

[42] See S. West 1967; Haslam 1997; Bird 2010.

[43] A point made by Finkelberg 2000, and confirmed by the evidence presented in section three of this chapter.

[44] See Schironi 2011, 89.

[45] Pfeiffer 1968, 226f. argues against attribution of the maxim to Aris-

designed to exclude arguments based on external considerations, such as whether the Homeric poems conform to particular theories of language, or the cosmos, or morality, i.e. to how things are, or should be, in the world outside that described in the poems. In this sense, it seems that Aristarchus elaborated on a position already stated by Aristotle in the *Poetics*, namely that Homeric poetry needs to be judged against the aim, intention, and knowledge of the poet, and not some other criterion pertaining to a different field of expertise. At the same time, Aristarchus probably also reacted against the practices of a famous contemporary of his, Crates of Mallos, who produced his Homeric scholarship at a different but equally prestigious library in Pergamum. It is extremely hard to reconstruct Crates' work, and I tend to agree with Maria Broggiato that ancient reports about the rivalry between him and Aristarchus may have produced overly schematic presentations of their influences, methods, and schools in Pergamum and Alexandria respectively.[46] Still, it seems that on the issue of extrinsic vs. intrinsic criteria for literary interpretation, Crates and Aristarchus did indeed differ.

We know that Crates held specific astronomical and geographical views. He maintained that the world was round, that the moon and the five known planets revolved around it, that the sun also rotated around the earth in a larger orbit, and that the stars were fixed points in a wider sphere still. What is more, Crates thought that Homer shared this view of the universe, and sought to demonstrate this through his famous 'sphere-making' interpretation of Homeric epic (σφαιροποιία, fr. 99 Broggiato). Quite what this interpretation was remains uncertain, but we do know that Crates chose, or made up, variant readings in order to make the text of Homer conform to his theory of the universe.[47]

This is not the kind of scholarship that Aristarchus practiced or, indeed, approved. We know that, on the basis of several clues contained in the texts, he reconstructed Homer's view of the universe as a series of layers: Hades and Tartarus underneath the earth, air and heaven above it, and Oceanus all around it.[48] More generally, it seems that

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tarchus, though he agrees that it reflects his practices; Porter 1992, 73 disagrees with Pfeiffer's case against attribution.

[46] Broggiato 2001, xix, who rightly emphasizes the lively dialogue between the two scholars and their schools.

[47] See further Broggiato 2001, xlviii-lv.

[48] On Aristarchus' views about Homer's views of the cosmos, see Lehrs 1882, 163-77.

Aristarchus explicitly warned readers not to read their own assumptions into the text – and not just in matters of geography or science. Myth also came under scrutiny, and specifically which stories Homer knew and did not know. For example, at the beginning of the *Iliad*, Agamemnon complains bitterly about the prophet Calchas, who has just told him that he should return the slave-girl Chryseis to her father: 'Prophet of evil', complains Agamemnon, 'never yet have you told me anything good' (*Il.* 1.106). Now, it may be tempting to interpret this outburst as an allusion to the sacrifice of Iphigenia. Right at the beginning of the war, Calchas had told Agamemnon that he needed to sacrifice his own daughter in order to ensure the launch of his expedition. Aristarchus warned readers against such an interpretation, pointing out that a different passage in the *Iliad* revealed that Homer did not know about the sacrifice of Iphigenia (Schol A *ad Il.* 9.145 Ariston., together with Schol. T *ad loc.*, which actually explains *Il.* 1.106-8).

The emphasis, for Aristarchus, was on internal consistency. When commenting on a specific passage in book 5 of the *Iliad,* he pointed out that the correct interpretation should rest on nothing 'outside the things said by the poet' (ἔξω τῶν φραζομένων ὑπὸ τοῦ ποιητοῦ, Schol. D *ad Il.* 5.385), and this comes close to Porphyry's statement of principle. What still remains to be seen, however, is what he meant by 'by the poet'. Answering this question involves engagement with a second aspect of Aristarchus' work, one that has attracted relatively little attention: his 'solutions from character'.[49] In short, as well as claiming that Homer needed to be elucidated only with reference to Homer, it seems that Aristarchus distinguished sharply between the poet and his characters, and this helped him solve some perceived contradictions in the text.

The 'solutions from character' are best illustrated by considering some concrete applications. At *Il.* 6.260-2, for example, Hecuba tells Hector that he should drink some wine since he is tired and needs to restore his strength. Hector, however, declines her offer, claiming that, on the contrary, wine would sap him of his strength (*Il.* 6.264f.). These contradictory statements left readers uncertain about Homer's exact views on wine, and whether it was advisable for warriors to consume it before battle. Both Hecuba and Hector seemed to talk in maxims, but which was the correct maxim? Again, it is Porphyry who preserves for us the lines of an argument Aristarchus must have used:[50]

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[49] Nünlist 2009, 116f. offers only a brief discussion; for a fuller treatment, see Dachs 1913.

> The question is why the poet contradicts himself, since, after saying 'when a man is tired . . .' he now states 'Do not sap my limbs . . .'. According to many, the solution to this problem is as follows: one thing is Hecate's character, who says that wine is useful; and another is Hector's, who denies that; and it is not surprising if, according to the poet, contradictory things are said by different characters. All the statements he makes in his own character need to be consistent and not self-contradictory; whereas all those he ascribes to characters are not his own, but are thought to belong to those who speak them; for this reason, he often allows dissonance, as also in these verses.
>
> (Porphyry, *Homeric Questions* on *Iliad* 6.265)

The idea was that the poet never contradicted himself, but could contradict his characters, and let them contradict each other.

Another example may serve to illustrate how Aristarchus evaluated the main narrative in relation to character speech. In *Iliad* 17, Apollo tries to encourage Hector by telling him that surely he does not fear Menelaus, who has always been soft. Ancient commentators worried about this: was Menelaus actually soft? Aristarchus placed a sign next to line 17.588, and then discussed the issue in his commentary. He suggested that Apollo's description was tendentious, and that the poet's own characterization of Menelaus as 'warlike' carried more weight:

> The sign is there to indicate that this should not be taken to suggest that Menelaus was in reality a soft warrior. Rather, the character, being hostile, says this to slander him. The poet, by contrast, calls Menelaus 'warlike'.
>
> (Schol. A *ad Il.* 17.588a Ariston.)

Now we know, from later sources, that Aristarchus' explanation became standard. Indeed, Athenaeus (writing in the late second and early third century CE) used it to criticize Plato:

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[50] For the relationship between Porphyry's statement and Aristarchus' 'solutions from character', see Dachs 1913.

> It was without reason, therefore, that Plato (*Symp.* 174c1) thought that Menelaus was a coward; for Homer speaks of him as 'warlike', and as fighting single-handed with the greatest gallantry in defense of Patroclus, and eager to fight in single combat with Hector before all others (cf. *Il.* 7.94-103), although he certainly was inferior to Hector in personal strength, about him alone, of all the men in the expedition, Homer said: 'And he went, trusting in his own courage' (*Il.* 2.588).
>
> (Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae* 5.5 Kaibel)

It is noteworthy that Athenaeus failed to apply 'a solution from character' to his own interpretation of Plato, since it was of course Socrates who called Menelaus 'soft', rather than Plato himself. This may suggest a difference between literary and philosophical traditions of exegesis: whereas Socrates was thought to express Plato's views, no such assumption was made concerning Homeric characters. Indeed, Apollo, god of poetry, was dismissed as a less reliable source of information than the poet himself.

There would of course be much more to say about Aristarchus' scholarship and his influence on later approaches to textual and literary criticism. His views on Homeric language, in particular, cannot be discussed here in detail – except to say that here too he favored 'Homeric usage' (Ὁμηρικὴ συνήθεια) over conformity to abstract rules. It seems in fact possible that his 'solutions from character' should be linked to the marked linguistic differences between the main narrative and character speech. These differences have attracted attention in modern scholarship,[51] but have not been systematically explored in relation to ancient scholarly practices.[52] Given that, already according to Plato's Ion, Homer knew 'the kind of things that a man says, or what a woman might say, or a slave, or a freeman, or someone receiving orders, or someone giving them' (see above), that Aristotle praised Homer for his ability to 'bring in a man or a woman or some other figure, never without individuality, but all having a character of their own' (again above), and given that Aristarchus developed elaborate 'solutions from character', it seems plausible to assume that strained and idiosyncratic language was accepted and even praised in character speech, but not in the main narrative. This is one of the many examples in which the texts of the Homeric poems, as we have inherited them, need to be considered together with the ancient traditions of scholarship that delivered them to us.

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[51] See the seminal study of Achilles' language offered by Griffin 1986, and several later studies, most recently Finkelberg 2012.

[52] For a preliminary attempt to do so, see Graziosi and Haubold 2015, but it seems to me that there would be scope for further investigation.

Conclusion: The First Philological Reception

According to the scholia to Dionysius Thrax, a pupil of Aristarchus of the second century BCE, the first critical edition of Homer was produced in Athens, in the archaic period.[53] We are told that the tyrant Pisistratus wanted to preserve the Homeric poems, and thus asked seventy-two philologists (γραμματικοί) to reassemble the scattered and ruined texts of Homer, which had suffered much through the vagaries of time, the weather, and natural disasters. Each philologist was asked to work by himself (κατ' ἰδίαν) and produce his own text. Each was to be paid according to the total number of lines produced.[54]

There are two aspects of the account that are of relevance to the present investigation. The first is that Zenodotus and Aristarchus were allegedly among the seventy-two first philologists. Modern scholars report this detail with scorn: the account in the scholia to Dionysius Thrax is – they point out – confused about chronology. It seems to me, however, that the confusion is telling. Just as modern philologists see themselves as working in the tradition of Hellenistic scholars, so the Hellenistic scholars identified with earlier philologists who allegedly worked for Pisistratus in archaic Athens. Scholarship, in other words, often works by a series of backward-looking identifications.[55] In reconstructing the formative stages of the Homeric traditions, such identifications play an important part.

The second interesting detail in the story is this: some of the seventy-two original editors added lines to the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* – because they wanted to be paid more. These extra verses, which were made up by individuals (ἰδίοι στίχοι), were later recognized as spurious, but by then the damage was done:

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[53] Schol. Dionysius Thrax 29f. Hilgard.

[54] The story resembles a similar legend, told in the *Letter of Aristeas*, about the origins of the Greek version of the Bible, but that need not concern us here; see Porter 1992.

[55] See Güthenke 2016.

> The verses had already won the place of familiarity and habit among readers of Homer. None of this escaped the critics, and so, respecting the force of custom and mental habit, they let these lines stand. But to each of the lines that were suspect, foreign, or unworthy of the poet, they added long dashes, to express their judgement that this was the case.[56]

The account describes the actual Hellenistic practice of marking a suspect line with a long dash. But it is on the perceptive comment about 'the place of familiarity and habit among readers' that I would like to focus. In antiquity, individual attempts to tamper with the text were monitored and condemned. The made-up lines of the mythical first philologists were a bad thing, as were Athenian attempts to tamper with the Catalogue of Ships (if indeed this is how we should account for line 2.558). On the other hand, Hellenistic philologists could not just get rid of suspect lines because that would, in turn, risk becoming a private and idiosyncratic act. They were, clearly, responding to a tradition that was already authoritative, and that was shaped by the 'familiarity and habit' of readers and audiences, as well as the work of earlier scholars. Thus, as well as backward identifications between scholars, it is crucial to place their work within a broader cultural history of the Homeric poems.

By considering both the formative stages of Homeric scholarship and their broader cultural context, we can begin to account for the process whereby the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* became classic texts. As Herrnstein Smith argues,

> the value of a literary work is continuously produced and re-produced by the very acts of implicit and explicit evaluation that are frequently invoked as 'reflecting' its value and therefore as being evidence of it. In other words, what are commonly taken to be the *signs* of literary value are, in effect, also its *springs*. The endurance of a classic canonical author such as Homer, then, owes not to the alleged transcultural or universal value of his works but, on the contrary, to the continuity of their circulation in a particular culture.[57]

This stark pronouncement, which is in many ways typical of the 1980s, needs in some ways to be tempered – and a cross-cultural comparison between Homeric epic and the Chinese *Book of Songs* can help us to do so in at least two ways. The first is that it can point to idiosyncrasies not just at the level of individual scholars or works, but in terms of entire literary cultures. The second is that it can point to some important commonalities in the making of a classic.

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[56] Schol. Dionysius Thrax 29.16-30.17 Hilgard.

[57] Herrnstein Smith 1983, 30.

Homeric epic gave rise to a tradition of criticism which remains at least as influential as the Homeric poems themselves. Every child who grows up in Europe today and discovers, say, an anachronism or factual inaccuracy in a film or novel, will soon be told, by a parent or a teacher, that that kind of mistake is unimportant in the judgement of art. The parent or teacher in question may never have read Homer, let alone Aristotle's comments on Homeric epic, and yet his or her attitudes to the judgement of literature have their roots in early responses to Homeric epic. Even the most basic aspects of literary criticism, then, aspects we often dismiss as obvious, are in fact the product of specific critical choices. Comparison with independent traditions of scholarship can help to outline what Herrnstein Smith calls the 'contingencies of value'. But it seems to me even more important, given that we now know how subjective and culturally specific literary value is, to seek out possible commonalities between different traditions. Lively debate, disagreement between different schools, scholarly selection, the insistence that 'everything' is contained within the classic, an interest in allegory and other 'under-thoughts', the regimenting of quotation, the symbiosis between literate culture and oral performance, and (perhaps most strikingly) the emphasis on emotional impact and communicative intent, can all be usefully compared – but only once the processes of circulation and evaluation within a particular culture have been set out.

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2

Odes Scholarship in Its Formative Stage

Achim Mittag

Introduction

This paper surveys the formative stage of *Odes* scholarship, when the *Book of Odes* (*Shijing*; henceforth also: *Odes*) in its entirety and individual Odes became subject of citation, reference, discussion, exposition, and commentary. In the course of this formative period, the *Odes* were not only widely used in various genres of early writings, but also became a centerpiece of a set of texts which attained canonical status in the Han dynasty (206 BCE – 220 CE) and are commonly referred as the “Chinese Classics”.

The arteries of the growing body of “classical learning” in early China were scholarly traditions and lineages in form of “schools”. This paper concentrates on the emergence of such “schools” and the formation of the basic exegetical framework, which was to determine the reading and interpretation of the *Odes* for the two thousand years to come. As tradition has it, Han *Odes* scholarship was dominated by four “schools”:[1] the Three *Odes* Schools – the “schools” of Lu 魯, Qi 齊, and Han 韓, which have survived only in citation fragments – and the Mao 毛 School, from which originates the *textus receptus*, the *Maoshi* 毛詩, the only intact recension of the *Odes* that has been handed down until today, and, in addition, the first extant commentary, with the title of *Commentary to the Odes in the Mao Recension, With Explanations of Characters With Obsolete and Unusual Meanings* (*Mao Shi guxun zhuan*), usually abbreviated to *Mao Commentary* (*Maozhuan*).

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[1] It should be noted that the book catalogue of the Han imperial library actually lists six “schools”, see *Hanshu* 30: 1707-1708.

To grasp the main drift of Han *Odes* scholarship, we must look into the intellectually vibrant world of the Hundred Schools from the later Warring States period (c. 320–221 BCE). We will do so by focussing on two different approaches to reading and understanding the *Odes*, which interacted and intermingled in the course of time. The key notions underlying these two approaches are the terms "aim" or "communicative aim" (*zhi* 志) and "emotions" (*qing* 情), respectively. Hence, the two approaches will be addressed as the "aim"-oriented and the "emotions"-centered approaches in the following.

The emergence of these two exegetical approaches followed a chronological sequence, with the "aim"-oriented approach leading the way. Mencius (Mengzi, 372?–289 BCE) can be regarded as its forerunner. The "emotions"-centered approach originated with Xunzi (313?–238 BCE), the most prominent figure of the early Confucian "school" next to Mencius. In view of the dating of the *Book of Xunzi*,[2] it seems likely to assume that the "emotions"-centered approach developed in the time from the mid-third to the mid-second century BCE (c. 250–150 BCE). The further development of *Odes* scholarship was characterized by the confluence of the two approaches. A consummate synthesis was achieved with the "Preface to the *Odes* of the Mao School" ("Maoshi xu") or "Great Preface" ("Daxu"), [3] a short text about the *Odes* and its structure in general, which is cautiously dated to the second century BCE (c. 200–100 BCE). Traditionally attributed to Confucius' disciple Zixia (507–400 BCE), it has been hailed as "the fountainhead of later Chinese poetic theory".[4]

The three mentioned texts from about two centuries (c. 300 BCE to c. 100 BCE) – the books of *Mengzi* and *Xunzi* and the "Great Preface" – serve as the spine of our survey, to which materials from several other transmitted texts are added.[5] The problem is that the datings of these texts are controversial and that, moreover, we must always reckon with the possibility that passages which contain citations from or references to the *Odes* were inserted into the respective text at a later point of time. Thus, surveying the formative stage of *Odes* scholarship poses a challenging puzzle. To this puzzle further pieces were added by the tomb text manusripts written on silk and bamboo or wooden slips, which were excavated since the 1970's in large numbers. Relevant to our survey are five texts, [6] in particular a text known as "Confucius' Discussions of Odes" ("Kongzi shilun"), the lead text of the serial edition of the Shanghai Museum corpus of tomb texts manuscripts (2001ff.), which has attracted much attention from researchers worldwide.[7]

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[2] Loewe 1993, 178-180; Qu Wanli 1983, 409-411.

[3] As a separate text, the "Preface to the *Odes* of the Mao School" was first published in *Wenxuan* 45: 20b-22a.

[4] Lewis 1999, 173.

[5] Reference will be made to the following three canonical works: (1) the voluminous *Zuo Tradition of the Spring and Autumn Annals* (*Chunqiu Zuozhuan* or simply *Zuozhuan*), (2) the *Analects* (*Lunyu*), and (3) several texts or chapters from the *Records of Rites* (*Liji*) attributed to the early Confucian "school", namely (3.1) "The Great Learning" ("Daxue"), (3.2) "The Doctrine of the Means" ("Zhongyong"), (3.3) "The Black Jacket" ("Ziyi"), and (3.4) "The

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Records of Music" ("Yueji"). Traditionally, these works were all considered older than our three reference texts. Modern scholarship has revised traditional datings, without being able to determine exact dates in each case; see Loewe 1993, 69-73, 313-323, and 293-297; Qu Wanli 1983, 361-370, 382-389, and 346-354 (for *Zuozhuan*, *Lunyu*, and *Liji*, respectively).

[6] These five texts are the following (in chronological order of the excavations): (1) one of the silk manuscripts from Mawangdui (with 168 BCE as the date *ante quem*); (2) the *Fuyang Shijing*, unearthed from tomb #1 of Shuanggudui, Fuyang, Anhui Province (dating from 165 BCE); (3) and (4) two recensions of the "The Black Jacket", one from tomb #1 of Guodian, Jingmen, Hubei Province (dating from c. 300 BCE) and the other from the large corpus of bamboo strips purchased by the Shanghai Museum on the Hong Kong antique market in 1994 (also dating from c. 300 BCE); (5) "Confucius' Discussions of Odes" ("Kongzi shilun"), which also belongs to that corpus. Consisting of over 1,200 bamboo strips with more than 35,000 characters, it has been and continues to be successively published by the Shanghai Museum, so far in nine volumes. The origin of this large corpus of bamboo strips is not clear, but it is believed to originate from looted tombs in about the same area north of the Warring States period's Chu capital (nowadays Jingzhou, Hubei Province), where the tomb text manuscripts of Baoshan and Guodian were excavated in 1987 and 1997, respectively. Because of textual and orthographic similarities with manuscripts from these two excavations, the Shanghai Museum bamboo-strip manuscript corpus is believed to date as well from c. 300 BCE. See Chao Fulin 2014, 3-13.

[7] Note that the title "Kongzi shilun," or just "Shilun" ("Discussions of Odes"), is not an original title. The text consists of twenty-nine bamboo strips of varying length, with a total of over 1,500 characters, of which 1,006 are readable; see *Shanghai bowuguan cang Zhanguo zhushu*, Vol. 1. In the following the text is referred to by the numbers of the strips according to this

Our survey will proceed along the three stages of early *Odes* scholarship distinguished above and hence is divided into three main sections, to which a preceding and a final section is added. The opening section discusses the significance attributed to Confucius as the patron or *assertor*[8] of the *Odes*. In the final section, we will take a glance at the rise of the early *Odes* "schools" and the further development of the Mao School from ca. 150 BCE to 200 CE, which reached completion with Zheng Xuan (127-200 CE). Hailed as the paragon of Han "classical learning", Zheng Xuan authored a commentary, *Zheng's Expositions* (*Zhengjian*), which was intended to go together with the *Mao Commentary* and the so-called Prefaces. These comprise the aforementioned "Great Preface" and, in addition, short introductory notes to each of the 305 Odes (plus six Odes of which the texts were lost), which are also known as "Small Prefaces" ("Xiaoxu"). The ensemble of the two commentaries by Mao and Zheng plus the Prefaces is the only intact *Odes* commentarial work from the Han dynasty. It is crowned by the *Chronological Tables of the Odes* (*Shipu*), a work arranged in tabular form and chronological order, which is also attributed to Zheng Xuan. Discussion of these various works must be limited to some brief remarks.

1. Confucius' rise to become the *assertor* of the *Odes*

Throughout the ages a basic tenet of *Odes* scholarship was the assumption that the *Odes* lay at the heart of Confucius' teachings and, moreover, that Confucius was its *assertor*, the one who warranted the ultimate truth of this anthology. Subsequently, Confucius was attributed its editorship. In the following, we will glance at this process.

The earliest reference to Confucius' redaction of the *Odes* is found in an entry of the *Analects* (*Lunyu*), where it is said that Confucius, on his return to his homeland Lu, "put the music in order so that the Elegantiae (Ya) and Hymns (Song) got their proper place" (*Lunyu* 9.14). As modern scholarship has convincingly argued, this entry actually is

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edition's arrangement. It should be noted that this arrangement is controversial. See Chao Fulin 2013, 14-21 (with a useful overview of nine different arrangements on p. 16-17).

[8] I gratefully acknowledge my indebtedness to Professor Jan Assmann for this notion.

about Confucius' concern with the correct performance of Elegantiae and Hymns in rituals and ceremonies, not about any editorial work.[9]

The *Analects* is the richest early source of Confucius' thoughts about and his dealing with the *Odes*. According to Steven Van Zoeren, one can distinguish three groups of Odes-related passages in the *Analects*, which, in their chronological order, are largely congruent with the *Analects*'s presumed three-layered formation: First, passages in which the Odes are treated as music or integral parts of ritual performances that involved music. Apart from the citation just referred to, a case in point is Confucius' comment on the first Ode "Crying Ospreys" (Mao 1"Guan ju"): "["Crying Ospreys"] conveys joy, but not overly so, sorrow, but not harmfully so" (*Lunyu* 3.20).[10] Second, passages in which Odes function as pretexts, as a repository of sayings and maxims which are referred to for further discussion.[11] Third, passages in which the *Odes* are treated as strong texts, viz. as texts to be studied by their own right.[12]

The decisive advance toward establishing and acknowledging Confucius as *assertor* seems to have occurred within the early Confucian "school", or to be more precise, within the scholarly lineage which has been labeled as "Zisi-Mengzi School" (*Si Meng xuepai*).[13] This is reflected by a group of six transmitted philosophical texts, which can be losely identified as belonging to that "school".[14] Throughout these six texts, the Odes are frequently being cited as the main source of authoritative wisdom – altogether at exactly one hundred instances – and at many instances with explicit connection with Confucius.[15] Yet, there is no reference to Confucius' having edited the *Odes*.

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[9] Van Zoeren 1991, 30.

[10] I follow Van Zoeren's convincing argument; cf. ibid., 30-31.

[11] For two foremost examples, see *Lunyu* 3.8 and 1.15.

[12] There are three passages of this type; see *Lunyu* 16.13; 17.9, and 17.10.

[13] In the recent years, there has been abundant research on this scholarly lineage, which was pioneered by the late Professor Pang Pu in 1980 and since then has become "the hottest topic in a 'fever' of Confucian studies in mainland China" (Shaughnessy 1997, 11); cf. ibid., 63-64.

[14] Namely, the *Book of Mencius* and the five texts from the *Liji* listed in fn. 5 (3).

[15] This is most obvious in "Ziyi" ("Black Jacket"; see above fn. 5 [3.3]), which has received much attention in recent years due to the discovery of two tomb text manuscripts (see above fn. 6 [3] and [4]). In the transmitted version the text is divided into twenty-four (or, depending on different numbering,

The first reference occurs not prior to Sima Qian's (ca. 145-90/85 BCE) biography of Confucius in his *Records of the Grand Scribe* (*Shiji*), where Confucius is said to have compiled the *Book of Odes* by selecting among three thousand Odes.[16] The next important witness after Sima Qian, Ban Gu (32-92 CE), author of the *History of the Former Han Dynasty* (*Hanshu*), confirmed Confucius' role as the *Odes*' editor, yet without repeating the statement concerning the number of three thousand songs.[17] Elsewhere, Ban Gu speaks of Confucius as having established the transmitted recension of the *Odes* by "trimming" the original corpus of songs (*shanshi*).[18] This notion became a basic assumption that dominated *Odes* scholarship ever since.[19]

In the wake of Confucius' rise to become *assertor*, the aforementioned Zixia, owing to Confucius' appraisal of Zixia's sagacity in discussing the Odes (see *Lunyu* 3.8) and to an extended conversation with Confucius recorded elsewhere,[20] witnessed a posthumous career in the emerging pantheon of *Odes* scholarship. An early reference in this respect is found in the Mao School's claim that Zixia was its progenitor.[21] It may well be that other *Odes* "schools" sought to enhance their reputation by claiming provenance from other prominent disciples of Confucius, notably from Zigong (520–? BCE).[22]

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twenty-five) pericopes, each of which begins with a saying of Confucius, introduced by "the Master said" (*zi yue*), and ends with a quotation from the *Odes*, the *Book of Documents*, or the *Book of Changes*. Remarkably, the *Odes* with sixteen quotations is the most frequently quoted classic. For an in-depth study, including a translation of the two manuscript and the received versions, see Shaughnessy 1997.

[16] *Shiji* 47: 1936.

[17] *Hanshu* 30: 1708.

[18] *Hanshu* 100B: 4244. Similarly, Wang Chong (27-97 CE) noted that Confucius had "discarded the repetitious" (*shanqu fuchong*), see *Lunheng*, "Zhengshuo pian", 1589.

[19] *Suishu* 32: 918 and Kong Yingda, "Xu", *Maoshi zhengyi*, 261, *hang* 8: "[Confucius] ordered the writings that had been left behind, collated the essence and the repetitious" (*lizheng yi, ji qi jinghua, chi qi fanchong*).

[20] *Liji*, 29 "Kongzi xianju", 51: 1616c-1623a; for a German translation, see Röllicke 1992, 102-106.

[21] Reported in *Hanshu* 30: 1708, yet this claim's credibility is doubted.

[22] In discussing the *Odes* with Confucius, Zigong was similarly lauded as Zixia; see *Lunyu* 1.15.

2. The emergence of the “aim”-oriented approach (ca. 300 – 250 BCE)

The “aim”-oriented approach is enshrined in the famous dictum, “Odes articulate aims (*shi yan zhi* 詩言志)”.[23] As this dictum appears in a text of the *Book of Documents*,[24] which relates to the legendary sage-emperor Shun from the late third millenium (traditionally, r. 2255 – 2208 BCE), traditional scholarship took its origin in high antiquity for granted.[25] However, we can surmise that it dates from around 300 BCE.[26] It takes on the form of a gloss which explains the character *shi* 詩, “Ode”; “poetry”,[27] and provided the model of a similar dictum which probably dates from Han times and reads, “Odes articulate ‘holding’” (*shi yan chi* 詩言持).[28] We can understand this dictum as meaning, “Odes articulate *the aim to which the lyrical subject* holds”. Important is here the facet of duration. It leads us to another angle of the semantic field of *zhi* 志, namley “mindset” or “disposition”.” A case in point is Confucius' saying, "At fifteen, I had *my mind bent on* learning"[29].

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[23] Since early *Odes* scholarship is not much concerned with the performative practice of “telling one’s aims” (*yan zhi*) through the recitation of Odes or verses from Odes, we here can pass over this notion as well as over the corresponding notion of “reciting Odes” (*fushi*). For further discussion of these two notions, see David Schabert’s article in this volume.

[24] *Shangshu*, “Yu shu”; Legge 1960: III, 48.

[25] See e.g. “Xu”, *Shipu*, 1a.

[26] Qu Wanli 1983, 321.

[27] The gloss consists of the semantic element *yan* 言, “to speak (in an elated way); to articulate”, on the left side, and the phonetic element *si* (**dz’i̯əg*) 寺, on the right side. In its archaic form the latter was written with the graph that shows a foot, *zhi* (**ṫz’i̯əg*) 止, which in oracle bone and bronze inscriptions was commonly used as loan for the homophonous *zhi* 之 or 至 (**ṫ’i̯əg*), “to go to; to arrive”; cf. Karlgren 1987, # 961 a-f, # 962 a-b. In later usage the graph *zhi* 止 was corrupted into *shi* 士, which forms the upper part of the character *zhi* 志, “(communicative) aim,” whereas the lower part is constituted by the graph *xin* 心, “heart” or “heart-and-mind”.

[28] The gloss takes the character *si* 寺 on the right side of *shi* 詩 in the meaning of *chi* 持, “to hold,” i.e. with the additional semantic element “hand”, *shou* 扌, on the left side. See *Wenxin diaolong*, “Mingshi” (Shih 1983, 61).

From the Prefaces, it appears that this meaning of "aim" was common usage in early *Odes* scholarship.[30] To give four examples: First and second, according to the Prefaces of "The Dolichos Spread" (Mao 2 "Ge tan") and "Mouse-Ear" (Mao 3 "Juan'er"), both these Odes are about Taisi, wife of King Wen (11th cent. BCE). She is said to have been "*dedicated to* woman's work" in her youth and to have shown "*enduring concern* about the promotion of virtuous and capable officials" in her life after marriage. Third, according to the Preface of "Milky Way" (Mao 258 "Yun Han"), this Ode praises King Xuan (r. 827-782) for his *dedication* to surpressing internal strife and disorder. Fourth, according to the Preface of "Owl" (Mao 155 "Chixiao"), the Duke of Zhou (11th cent. BCE) composed this Ode before setting out to put down a rebellion of his three half-brothers, in order to give testimony of his *true intentions*, namely his unconditional support of his nephew, the young King Cheng (r. 1042-1021 BCE).

With these examples of *zhi* in mind, we turn to Mencius' famous dictum, "We ought to meet the aim with our (own) thoughts" (*yi yi ni zhi* 以意逆志; *Mengzi* 5A.4), which is hailed as the earliest explicit hermeneutic in Chinese history.[31] It occurs in a dialogue between Mencius and a certain Xianqiu Meng. At issue is the sovereign's status vis-à-vis his own father and/or his predecessor. Xianqiu Meng challenges Mencius with the argument that once a son is being installed as king while his father is still alive, the sovereign–subject relationship transcends the father–son relationship so that the moral obligations of filial piety can be suspended with. To buttress his argument, Xianqiu Meng cites from "The Eastern States" (Mao 203 "Da dong") the line, "All are the king's servants". Mencius counters his interlocutor by arguing that the writer of this Ode had no intention to make a point in this debate and then asserts: "When speaking about the Odes, we may not pick out words to do harm to the poem, nor pick out (parts of the) poem to do harm to the *aim* (*zhi*). Rather, we ought to meet the aim with our (own) thoughts.” To elaborate his argument, Mencius then quotes two lines from another Ode. As their literal reading makes no sense, they must be understood figuratively.[32]

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[29] *Lunyu* 2.4. – Another example is *Lunyu* 7.6: "Let the will be set on the Way" (*zhi yu Dao*).

[30] Throughout the "Prefaces" the term *zhi* occurs twelve times, i.e. twice in the "Great Preface" (Pericope #1) and ten times in the Prefaces to Odes Mao 2, 3 (twice), 32, 40, 102, 138, 155, 258, and 294.

[31] Van Zoeren 1991, 68.

The Western reader will be inclined to understand *zhi* simply as the “*communitative* aim”, i.e. the Ode writer’s “aim”, or the intention of the text. Yet, as the first three discussed examples of occurrences of *zhi* in the Prefaces show, *zhi* can also be understood as referring to an Ode’s lyrical subject. Hence, Mencius’ dictum implies a text hermeneutic as much as it implies a hermeneutic of a person’s character.

In ancient China, the art of examining a person’s character (*guanren* 觀人), analogous to the techniques of physiognomy and palmistry, was regarded to be a prerequisite for recruiting virtuous and competent officials.[33] From the fact that the examination of a person’s *zhi*, “mindset, disposition, aspiration” (*guanzhi* 觀志) was considered to be quintessential to examine his or her character,[34] we can infer that Odes were being read as a lyrical elaboration of those descriptive manuals which were used to examine different types of human character. In fact, there did exist such a conception, not of the Odes in general, but of the Odes from the first part, the Guofeng. The respective reference is found in the aforementioned manuscript text “Confucius’ Discussions of Odes,” which presumably dates from c. 300 BCE and thus is about contemporary with the *Book of Mencius*. We turn to it now.

“Confucius’ Discussions of Odes” is best characterized as a proto-Preface. Just like the “Great Preface,” it encompasses some general statements, not only about the Odes as such, but also about the four parts of the *Book of Odes*: Hymns of Zhou (Zhousong), Major Elegantiae (Daya), Minor Elegantiae (Xiaoya), and Airs of the States, in this order, just in the reversed order of the Mao standard version.[35] In addition and similar to the “Small Prefaces,” it contains brief explanations concerning about fifty Odes.[36] These explanations are terse to the point of consisting of one single character only and convey the impression of a first reading-off, thereby yielding readings that are quite different from those in the Mao-Zheng *Commentary*.[37] Significantly, they almost entirely dispense with references to historical figures or historical events.[38]

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[32] Mencius refers to “Milky Way” (Mao 258 “Yun Han”), stanza 3, lines 5-6: Here we are told, in hyperbolic language, that a perilous drought struck the Zhou people, of whom “not a single person will survive”.

[33] Richter 2005, 305-332.

[34] Richter 2005, 51-52 and 367-389 (translation of Section 2 from *Da Dai Liji* 72 and *Zhou yishu* 58).

[35] It is noteworthy that the manuscript text’s general statements concerning the notions of “Song”, “Ya”, and “Feng” in this reversed order correspond neatly with the opening passage of “The Great Learning”, which then can be translated as, “What the Great Learning teaches is, to make illustrious the

In many cases, both the general statements and the brief explanations are framed as Confucius’ sayings.[39] This is in particular the case with the general statement about the Odes as such. Taking up the notion of “aim” (*zhi*), it establishes this notion as a pervavise theme throughout the *Odes*: “Confucius said, ‘As to the Odes, it cannot be that aims are concealed.’”[40]

Now the question is whether “aims” are here to be understood as the poets’ “intentions” or rather as the “disposition” of persons depicted in the Odes. Considering the general statement concerning the Airs of the States, the latter seems to be the case. This general statement

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illustrious virtue [of the ancestors; =Song], to extend gentility to the people [who come to court; =Ya], to stop at the point of greatest pleasure” [=Feng]”.

[36] References to fifty Odes (according to Chao Fulin 2013, 392, even to 56 Odes) can be ascertained beyond doubt (Guofeng: 25; Xiaoya: 20; Daya: 2; Zhousong: 3); cf. Li Xueqin 2002, 135-138.

[37] Chao Fulin 2013, 393ff.

[38] An exception is “King Wen” (Mao 235 “Wenwang”), which by its title is already linked to King Wen.

[39] In this respect, the “Confucius’ Discussions of Odes” seems to have originated from the Zisi-Mengzi School. Yet, differently from the Odes citations in the transmitted texts of this “school”, the manuscript text contains copious references to the Guofeng Odes, which brings it closer to the *Zuozhuan*.

[40] Strip #1: 孔子曰：詩亡（無）隱志. The character *yin* 隱 is not clearly identifiable and hence has led to five different identifications; see Chao Fulin 2013, 555-556. Its identification as *yin* was proposed by Li Xueqin 2002, 138, and adopted by Qiu Xigui 2002, 139-141, and Chao Fulin 2013, 556-558. However, Chao Fulin takes *yin* to mean “basing upon; supporting,” and not “concealing,” to which I cannot agree. The main reason is that “concealing” makes perfect sense, especially when we consider the two similarly worded statements concerning music (*yue*) and literary writings (*wen*), which follow the opening statement and read, “As to music, it cannot be that emotions are concealed. As to literary writings, it cannot be that one’s intentions are concealed”.

reads: “As to the Airs of the States, the subject matter which they encompass is broad. From them we obtain insights into the manners and customs of the people and they expand (the scope of) recruiting able men. Their poems and verses are refined, their melodies formidable.”[41] Important is here the idea of the Guofeng as a means of recruiting able men for service in government. As we have seen above, this is exactly the same idea which underlay the art of examining a person’s character in ancient China.

In fact, some of the manuscript text’s glosses concerning individual Odes clearly focus on an Ode’s principle persona or on a person’s *zhi* in the sense of “mindset” or “disposition”.[42] Yet, on the other hand, there are also some glosses which indicate what the respective Ode is about and hence can be understood as seeking to establish its “communicative aim”.[43]

Thus, it seems that from the very beginning the “aim”-oriented approach involved an ambiguity which resulted from the notion of “aim” (*zhi*) as referring either to the Ode’s writer’s intention or to the lyrical subject’s “disposition”. It seems that the earliest commentator of the *Book of Mengzi*, Zhao Qi (c. 108-201 CE), in his commentarial note concerning the passage of Mencius’ dictum discussed above, had sensed this ambiguity and had tried to circumvent it – by taking *zhi* in its meaning as a verb, “to give account of”.[44]

It should be noted that “Confucius’ Discussions of Odes” is to date the earliest source of the term “Guofeng”. As we have seen, the given explanation of this term revealed a clear preference for the “aim”-oriented approach. It was only with the rise of the “emotions”-oriented approach that a fundamentally new understanding of the Guofeng evolved.[45]

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[41] Strip #3: *Bang* [*Guo*] *feng, qi nei* [*na*] *ye zhuan* [*bo*], *guan ren su gu* [*su*] *yan, da qian* [*lian*] *cai yan. Qi yan wen, qi sheng shan* 邦 [國]風内 [納] 物也專 [博]，觀人谷 [俗] 焉，大 [僉] 斂材焉. 其言文，其聲善。-- Note that the manuscript text writes *bang* 邦, “state(s),” instead of the synonym *guo* 國 (see also Strip #4) and *cai* 材, “able men,” instead of the homophon *cai* 才.

[42] See e.g. the notes concerning Odes Mao 67 “Junzi yangyang”, 195 “Xiao min”, and 202 “Lu e” (Strips #25, #8, #23).

[43] See e.g. the notes concerning Odes Mao 27 “Lü yi”, 28 “Yan yan”, 70 “Tu yuan”, 169 “Di du”, 266 “Qing miao” (Strips #10 [2x], #23, #20, #21).

[44] Zhao Qi’s gloss reads: “The Ode’s writer *gives account of* the affairs that were sought to be achieved” (*Mengzi zhangju* 9A: 2735c, *hang* 23b).

3. The emergence of the "emotions"-centered approach (ca. 250 – 150 BCE)

The "emotions"-centered approach is closely connected with the concept of music expounded in the "Records of Music" ("Yueji"), a text transmitted in the *Records of Rites*. Hence, it is reasonable to assume that this approach emerged at about the same time as the "Records of Music". Traditionally, this text was considered a remnant part of the lost *Book of Music* (*Yuejing*). Yet according to modern scholarship, it substantially derived from the "Treatise on Music" ("Yuelun") contained in the *Book of Xunzi*.[46] Hence, in this section we will turn to Xunzi (viz.the *Book of Xunzi*), yet before to a much-cited passage in the *Zuo Tradition* which records a comprehensive Odes performance on the occasion of Prince Jizha's visit to the state of Lu in 544 BCE.[47]

Listening to the music performances of the Guofeng Odes, one section after the other, Prince Jizha gives brief comments on the political stability of the respective state. Thus, he contemplates the Western Zhou dynasty's shifting its capital to the east (in 771 BCE), predicts that the state of Zheng will be the first one to vanish – what actually happened in 375 BCE – and foresees that the state of Qin will grow to great size – actually a development which began to set in from c. 320 BCE onward. Similarly, on listening to the performances of the Major

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[45] This includes the issue of eroticism in the Guofeng. In fact, "Confucius' Discussions of Odes" can be considered the first text which touches upon this problematic issue. In contrast to Confucius' comment about "Crying Ospreys" in the *Analects* (see above), the manuscript text clearly refers to the Ode's text, not to its musical performance: "[It] depicts how sexual desires are contained by rituals" (cf. Strip #10: *"Guan ju" yi se yu yu li*). Nevertheless, this reading still differs considerably from the one which derived from the "emotions"-centered approach (see below).

[46] Loewe 1993, 295; Qu Wanli 1983, 351. Two other recensions of the "Records of Music" with large-scale overlappings are found in the *Spring and Autumn of Lü Buwei* (*Lüshi chunqiu*) and the *Records of the Grand Scribe* (*Shiji* 24 "Yueshu").

[47] *Zuozhuan*, Xiang 29, 39: 2006a-2008c. For an annotated translation, see DeWoskin 1982, 19-27.

Elegantiae (Daya), Prince Jizha is reminded of the glorious age of the Western Zhou dynasty's founding, while the Minor Elegantiae (Xiaoya) make him sense the Zhou royal house's decline.[48]

Setting aside the question of dating this passage,[49] we focus on its underlying conception of correspondence between music and the body politic. It is this conception which lies at the core of the "Records of Music", where it says:

> The melodies (*yin* 音) of an age of good order are peaceful and move us to be joyful, whereas the melodies of a state bound to vanish are full of grief and move us to be melancholic … . Alas, the pervasiveness of sounds and melodies corresponds with the pervasiveness of government"[50].

The correspondence between music and government is the "Records of Music's" main theme on the outer or macrocosmic plane; on the inner or microcosmic plane, the focus is shifted to the correspondence between music and human "emotions" (*qing*). Thus, it is said that the ordinary people's habit of mind (*min xin* 民心) finds expression in melodies (*yin*), which are rooted in the emotions "aroused in our breast" (*qing dong yu zhong* 情動於中)[51]. Though it is beyond our power that the heart-and-mind (*xin* 心) is stirred up and emotions are aroused, we are in command of restraining and moderating them, with the aim, just like in music, to achieve harmony (*he* 和).

Harmony was considered the ultimate aim of humans' effort to rise above their given nature (*xing* 性) and to reach outwards to perfection. As to music, this point of perfection was thought to be a sort of spherical music, a "music without sounds" (*wu sheng zhi yue* 無聲之樂)[52] and hence inaudible for common people. Harmonious sounds audible by the human ear were conceived as “intermediate” or “moderated sounds” (*zhongsheng* 中聲) .

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[48] Note that in the cited *Zuozhuan* passage, the proper sequence of the two Ya parts is followed, i.e. the performance of the Xiaoya precedes that of the Daya.

[49] That this narrative passage is not an authentic record, but must have been inserted at a later point of time seems is suggested by Prince Jizha's "predictions" concerning the destinies of the states Zheng and Qin.

[50] *Liji*, 19 "Yue ji", 37: 1527c, *hang* 13-17.

[51] Ibid., *hang* 14.

[52] *Liji*, 29 "Kongzi xianju", 51: 1617a, *hang* 11, 14; 1617b, *hang* 3-4.

Now, Xunzi’s innovation – if we for once accept the identification of Xunzi the man with the author of the *Book of Xunzi* – was to transpose this concept of music and emotions into the realm of poetry. This is highlighted by Xunzi’s characterization of the Odes as the province where “the intermediate sounds are brought to rest”.[53] In the first place, this characterization applied to the Guofeng Odes. In stark contrast to the manuscript text “Confucius’ Discussions of Odes”, Xunzi understood the Guofeng as a repository of instructions of how to deal with emotions, notably with love and sexual desire. This becomes manifest from a general statement about the Guofeng Odes,[54] which reads:

> That the “Airs of the States” are erotic (*haose* 好色) is commented upon by the “Commentary” as follows. ‘They (give expression to) fully satisfying desires without erring in (transgressing) the stopping-point. Their sincerity can be compared to metal and stone whose sounds are permitted within the ancestral temple.[55]

The frankness of this statement is surprising, even more so in view of the fact that in the Mao-Zheng *Commentary*, and hence in traditional *Odes* exegesis in general, references to sexual love and erotic overtones are widely obliterated.[56]

The frankness of Xunzi’s unscrupulous statement about the Guofeng in their entirety resonates with the frankness of a discussion about the first Ode “Crying Ospreys”, which is found in a silk manuscript text unearthed from tomb no. 3 at Mawangdui.[57] This discussion also provides us with a hint how to understand Xunzi’s abstract remark about “the stopping-point” with regard to an individual Ode.

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[53] *Xunzi*, 1 “Quanxue”, 7.

[54] This is one of the rare occurrences of the term Guofeng in extant pre-Qin source materials. Moreover, it should be noted that the chapter (“Dalüe”) in which it occurs is considered among the *Book of Xunzi*’s latest, which were certainly not written by Xunzi himself; see Qu Wanli 1983, 410-411.

[55] *Xunzi*, 27 “Dalüe,” 381. Translation adopted, with slight modifications, from Riegel 1997, 152. – It is unclear which “Commentary” (*zhuan*) is being referred to.

[56] See Harbsmeier 1995, 333-344.

[57] See above fn. 6 (1).

The said discussion revolves around the lines 3 to 8 of stanza 2 of "Crying Ospreys". According to the Mao-Zheng *Commentary*, these lines refer to King Wen's wife Taisi, depicting her worry to find a "pure maid" for her husband, which causes her to toss around in bed at night.[58] However, the ordinary reader will agree with the Mawangdui manuscript, which identifies the poem's persona as a lover overcome by sexual desire for his girl. According to the Mawangdui manuscript text, this desire augments over the next four lines, from an "urgent" to an "extremely urgent need" (*ji* 急; *ji shen* 急甚). Yet how urgent this need gets – so the argument – it is after all a "minor liking" (*zi suo xiao hao* 自所小好; literally: "that what oneself considers a small liking"), subordinated to the "major liking" (*suo da hao* 所大好) of observing decency. As the Mawangdui manuscript points out, one would rather die than having sex in front of one's parents or brothers or in front of people from one's native place.[59]

In the Mawangdui manuscript, this argumentative pattern of distinguishing between "major" and "minor likings" or, in a wider sense, between higher and lower norms and values, is also employed in the discussion of other Guofeng Odes which involve other emotions. A case in point is the discussion of the Ode "Swallows" (Mao 28 "Yan yan"). According to the Mawangdui manuscript, this Ode is about grief in mourning; the depicted mourner is capable of true grief (in this case the "major" concern) just because he or she pays no heed to "a dangling lapel and headband" (appearance is here the "minor" concern).[60]

As in the case of "Crying Ospreys", the Mao-Zheng *Commentary* has a different reading, according to which the Ode is about the widowed wife of Duke Zhuang of Wei (r. 757-735 BCE), Zhuang Jiang, who, after her husband's death, escorts a former concubine on her way to return to her family. Two of the Three *Odes* School share Mao-Zheng's reading of "Yan yan" as a song of farewell, yet both commentaries have their own versions. It is noteworthy that the Mao School – being a latecomer among the early *Odes* "schools" (see below) – provides the most concrete and detailed historical information and hence makes the strongest case in favor of its version.[61]

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[58] Yu 1983, 384-385.

[59] Riegel 1997, 149-159.

[60] Riegel 1997, 159-162.

[61] Riegel 1997, 169-171.

This focus on historical contextualization points to the process of historicization, which gained momentum in the period under discussion, i.e. from c. 250-200 BCE. This encompassed the method of weaving Odes into webs of historical narration. Apart from some early examples found in the *Zuo zhuan*,[62] this practice is prominently reflected in the *Han Shi waizhuan* (*The Outer Commentary of the Han Odes School*), a collection of 306 episodes, short moralizing stories, and philosophical vignettes, which center upon or end up with a quotation from the *Odes*.[63] Attributed to the patron of the Han *Odes* School, Han Ying (fl. 2nd cent. BCE),[64] this work contributed considerably to an ever-growing body of historical information connected with each individual Ode.

Historicization thus became a main trajectory of early *Odes* scholarship. We can observe that both the "aim"-oriented and the "emotions"-centered approaches contributed to this trend. Whereas the "aim"-oriented approach provoked inquiry into the person(s) depicted in the Odes, the commentator who followed the "emotions"-centered approach needed to realize the specific situation in which the Ode's writer composed the Ode, in order to perceive the full range of emotions that were being given expression in poetry. Hence, it is not surprising that the two approaches got amalgamated at an early stage, to which we will turn now.

4. The confluence of the "aim"-oriented and the "emotions"-centered approaches, the synthesis of the "Great Preface" and the rise of Han *Odes* scholarship (200 – 100 BCE)

The confluence of the "aim"-oriented and the "emotions"-centered approaches is first and foremost testified by the "Great Preface". Divided into twenty-one pericopes, this epitome of early *Odes* scholarship text consists of not more than 490 characters;[65] its reduced version, which divides the text into fourteen pericopes, even consists of only 347 characters.[66] The following discussion refers to the latter version (yet references to the pericopes [“P.”] of both versions are indicated, with the numbers of the reduced form’s pericopes going first).

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[62] See e.g. the emplotment of "The Buxom Lady" (Mao 57 "Shi ren") and "The Yellow Birds" (Mao 131 "Huangniao") in *Zuozhuan*, Yin 3: 1724a; Wen 6: 1844a; translated in Legge 1960: V, 13 and 244.

[63] See Hightower 1952.

[64] For his short biography, see *Hanshu* 88; translated in Hightower 1948, 277-278.

The “Great Preface” begins with alluding to the famous dictum from the *Documents*, thereby giving prominence to the notion of “aim” or “disposition” (*zhi*):

> Odes come about by movement of our *disposition* that goes into a certain direction. Residing in the heart-and-mind, it (still) is “disposition”; getting articulated in verses, it becomes poetry. (P. 1=4)

Then follows a concise outline of the conception of emotions and their various expressions in dancing, singing, and musical performance, which is the very foundation of the “emotions-centered” approach:

> Emotions move within and take shape in words. Words are not enough, and so we sigh them. Sighing it is not enough, and so we draw them out in song. Drawing them out in song is not enough, and so all unawares our hands dancing them and our feet tapping them out [P. 2=5]. Emotions are manifest in sounds (*sheng*). When sounds are patterned, we call them melodies (*yin*) [P. 3=6]. The melodies of a well-governed age are peaceful and happy; its government is harmonious. The melodies of a chaotic age are resentful and angry; its government is perverse. The melodies of a state doomed to collapse are sorrowful and longing; its people are suffering [P. 3a=7].

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[65] For translations, see Wong 1983, 3-8; Van Zoeren 1991, 95-97. – In the translated parts presented in the following, I have mostly adopted Steven Van Zoeren’s translation, with slight changes.

[66] In the reduced version, the first three and the last three pericopes, which deal with “Crying Ospreys” and the general meaning of the first 25 Odes from the first two subsections, are being cut off and assembled to form the “Small Preface” of “Crying Ospreys”. The effect is that the subject matter of the “Great Preface” is concentrated upon the general statements about the Odes as a whole, its four parts, and poetry in general. This new arrangement of the “Great Preface” was first proposed by Zhu Xi (1130-1200). For a translation, see Legge 1960: IV, [34-36].

The theme of decline of government and deterioration of societal order is taken up again in P. 8=12.[67]

New territory is entered in P. 6=10, which introduces the first explicit set of poetical notions in Chinese poetics, the “Six Modes” (*liushu* 六術). Actually, the “Six Modes” comprise two separate sets of three notions each; one set concerns the three poetic means of expression, *fu* 賦, “narrative description”, *bi* 比, “simile”, and *xing* 興, “opening evocative impulse ”. As we will see below, early *Odes* exegesis only employed the latter notion as an exegetical device. The other set of notions concerns the three genres of Odes poetry, “Airs”, “Elegantiae”, and “Hymns”, from which derives the fourfold division of the *Book of Odes* in its received edition (since the Elegantiae are further differentiated by “minor” and “major” and hence divided into two parts, Xiaoya and Daya).[68] The “Great Preface” comes back to the fourfold divison with the notion of the “Four Beginnings” (*sishi* 四始), which is commonly understood as referring to the first Ode of each of the four parts.[69]

Apart from such novelties as the concepts of the “Six Modes” and “Four Beginnings”, the “Great Preface” must be credited with advances in three significant respects.

First, a novel understanding of the Guofeng.

The “Great Preface” adopts Xunzi’s theory about the “stopping-point” in the Airs of the States,[70] yet clearly places the Airs in the context of the political sphere by defining them as a medium used by both the rulers and the ruled; by the rulers, to transmit values out to the people in order to educate them; and by the ruled, to voice public concerns and discontent.[71] Henceforth providing the basis for the eminently political reading and interpretation of the one hundred and sixty Airs, this expanded notion of "Guofeng" ensured that the Airs' numerous love songs and erotic verses could be understood as "critques" directed against this or that lascivious member of the ruling elite.

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[67] “When the kingly way (*wangdao*) fell into decay and rites and rightesousness were discarded and state education ceased, when in the feudal states grew divergent forms of government and diverse customs found their way into the families, the “deviated Airs” (*bian Feng*) and “deviated Elegantiae” (*bian Ya*) were made.”

[68] The explanation given for this differentiation is that “In government there are matters of smaller and greater importance” (P. 12=16).

[69] Namely “Crying Ospreys”, “The Deer Call to One Another”, “King Wen”, and “The Ancestral Temple in Pure Stillness” (Mao 1 “Guan ju”, 161 “Lu ming”, 235 “Wenwang”, and 266 “Qing miao”).

[70] P. 10=14: “So the ‘deviated Airs’ (*bian Feng*), although coming into being from emotions, stop within the bounds of ritual and rightousness.”

Second, an innovative conception of the *Book of Odes* as a model of empire.

In the "Great Preface", the focus on the state is accentuated by the explanations concerning the notions of "Feng", "Ya", and "Song". As Mark Edward Lewis has acutely observed, these explanations "not only inscribe the ruler as the origin and theme of all verse, but they structure the anthology as a model of empire."[72] Centered upon the threefold division of Feng, Ya, and Song, this model is constructed as a tripartite structure which delineates an imagined ascent from the regions and their local customs and manners to the kingly government in the center and from there to the ancestral spirits in the temples of the royal house.[73] The effect of this conceived superstructure was that every Ode is accorded a place in the cosmo-political order of All-under-Heaven (*tianxia*). It seems that the Chancellor Kuang Heng (died 30 or 29 BCE), in a memorial submitted to the throne, had this superstructure in mind when he referred to the first Ode "Crying Ospreys" as exhibiting "the pivot of cosmic order" (*gangji zhi shou* 綱紀之首).[74]

Third, a conception that expanded the basis for the historicization of the *Odes*.

The model of empire as a superstructure of the *Odes* was conceived not as a static but a dynamic model, as a model of Zhou kingship which encompassed its entire history, from the mythical origins of the Zhou people to the conquest of the Shang dynasty and from the illustrious kings and rulers of the early Western Zhou dynasty to its decline and demise up until the deterioration of the "kingly way" (*wangdao* 王

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[71] P. 7=11: "Superiors used the Airs to transform those below. Those below used the Airs to satirize their superiors. They held to the literary form and made oblique their remonstrations. Thus, those who brought them forward did not make themselves guilty and those who listened to them found them apt to take them as admonitions."

[72] Lewis 1999, 175.

[73] Ibid.

[74] *Hanshu* 81: 3342.

道) in the Spring and Autumn period (722-481 BCE). At the core of this conception lay the twin notions of "normative" (*zheng* 正) and "deviated" (*bian* 變) and the notion of the "state historiographers" (*guoshi* 國史). The latter are said to have preserved the Guofeng Odes as a sort of counter-memories,[75] whereas the notions of "normative" and "deviated" provided a means to assign the great majority of Airs, Minor and Major Elegantiae to periods of rise and decline, which in turn determined their categorization as "praise", "critique", etc. The effect of this conception was tremendous; it contributed substantially to the general accepted view of the *Odes* as a book of history, juxtaposed to the *Book of Documents* and the *Spring and Autumn Annals* and thus being one of the "Three Histories" (*sanshi*).

In sum, the "Great Preface" laid the foundation of an exegetical framework of reading and interpreting the *Odes*, which subsequently was further elaborated by the "Small Prefaces". It became pervasive from the late first century BCE onward when esteem for the early Zhou dynasty, especially for the Duke of Zhou, surged.

5. The emergence of Odes "schools" (c. 150 BCE – 200 CE)

While the foregoing four sections surveyed basic assumptions concerning the *Odes* canon and the two main approaches of reading and interpreting the *Odes*, this section deals more concretely with the rise of the early Odes "schools", in particular with the Mao School and the exegatical works produced by it.

Information about the rise of the Odes "schools" is scarce; our main sources being the two early official histories, the *Records of the Grand Scribe* and the *History of the (Western) Han Dynasty*.[76] All what we reliably know is that the Three *Odes* Schools were elevated to official status as early as under the emperors Wendi (r. 179-158 BCE) and Jingdi (r. 158-141 BCE) and that each were granted a chair in the Imperial Academy under Han Wudi (141–87 BCE).[77] Being a latecomer, the Mao School received official status not prior to the reign of Emperor Pingdi (1-6 CE). Its name is derived from two scholars with the surname of Mao, who were not related yet connected to each other as teacher and student. Biographical information about the two Mao is scanty. The Elder Mao, supposedly hailing from the state of Lu, is said to have been a student of Xunzi, while the Younger Mao from the state of Zhao was an erudite (*boshi*) at the court of Prince Xian of Hejian (died 130 or 129 BCE).[78]

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[75] See (cf. P. 9=13). Ostensibly, the notion of the "state historiographers" was meant to account for the origin of the Airs of the States in the Spring and Autumn period (722-481 BCE), with an eye turned toward Mencius' statement according to which the *Spring and Autumn Annals* were produced when the Odes ceased to be made (*Mengzi* 4B.21). Presumably, this statement referred only to the Elegantiae and Hymns, not to the Airs.

[76] In addition, there is an appendix to the third-century work *Maoshi caomu niaoshou chongyu shu*, which surveys the teacher–student lineages of the Three *Odes* Schools and the Mao School. Although this work, in its main part, is beyond any doubt of being a "forged" book (see Deng Ruiquan and Wang

From these scanty and not fully reliable biographical references, we still can surmise that the Mao School emerged in the period from the late Warring States to the early Han period, i.e. roughly in the one hundred years from 250 to 150 BCE. The same time span can be assumed for the emergence of the Three *Odes* Schools.[79] From early biographical records we know that the four *Odes* "schools" obviously branched off into various lines and gave rise to more than a dozen works, none of which survived intact.[80] Considering the excavated manuscript texts, notably the *Fuyang Shijing*,[81] it is reasonable to assume an even greater diversity of scholarly traditions and a comparatively wide circulation of the *Odes*, which, by the late fourth and early third centuries BCE, was definitely not limited anymore to the cultural sphere of the Zhou ecumene in Northern China.

Guanying 1998, 125-127), the dating of this appendix to the third century is questionable; for it may well be that it was compiled on the basis of the survey of the early *Odes* "schools" teacher–student lineages in the seventh-century work *Jingdian shiwen xulu* (see Wu Chengshi 1984, 87-90).

[77] At some time during the two decades from 140–120 BCE; the date is not clear.

[78] Liu De, a half-brother of Emperor Wudi, was established as Prince of Hejian in 155 BCE; cf. Loewe 2000, 290.

[79] We get an idea of the approximate time of the beginnings of the early *Odes* "schools" in the course of the second half of the third century BCE by the biographical reference that Shen Pei, the progenitor of the Lu School, studied with a certain Fuqiu Bo, who is said to have been a disciple of Xunzi; see Hightower 1948, 251.

[80] Hightower 1948, 257-259.

[81] Hu Pingsheng and Han Ziqiang 1998.

Studies of the variants in the various *Odes* recensions based on the citation fragments of the Three *Odes* Schools as well as on archaeological texts have found a large number of variants vis-à-vis the Mao standard recension, which amounts to c. 30%.[82] It should be noted that these variants are mostly graphic variants based on homophony or near-homophony and mainly fall under two types of words, namely (1) rhyming, alliterative, and reduplicative binomes and (2) grammatical particles.[83] From these inquiries into the writing of the *Odes* we can conclude that there was no standard written version during the entire period under discussion (i.e. from c. 300 BCE–200 CE). It appears that a massive standardization set in only after the demise of the Han empire in the early third century CE. [84] We can surmise that this standardizing trend also contributed to the ceasing of the Three *Odes* Schools. In turn, the importance of the early oral tradition, including the performance of the Odes, cannot be overemphasized. As Martin Kern has observed, their transmission "could [not] have worked without being embedded in adequate oral instruction".[85]

After the first compilations of citation fragments of the Three *Odes* Schools were made in the thirteenth century, the study of the Three *Odes* Schools developed into a subfield of *Odes* scholarship. A glance at this subfield shows that all in all the differences between the Mao School and the Three *Odes* Schools are not too spectacular, neither in respect of the text recensions, nor regarding the readings and interpretations.

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[82] According to Kern 2005, 155, the number of variants in the *Odes* recensions of the Three *Odes* Schools based on citation fragments only amounts to 2.2%. However, this is contradicted by Ulrich Unger's meticulous study of the variants which appear in *Odes* citations in the early second-century Chinese dictionary *Explaining Graphs and Analyzing Characters* (*Shuowen jiezi*) and in the *Hanshi waizhuan* (see above). According to this study (Unger 1954), the former work cites the *Odes* at 454 instances and the latter work at 552 instances, with variants occuring, respectively, in 230 and 107 cases.

[83] Kern 2005, 159 and 175-176.

[84] This is suggested by Wolfgang Behr's fine study of a bronze mirror from the state of Wu, which presumably dates from the early third century CE and which carries the inscription of "The Buxom Lady" (Mao 57 "Shiren"). The inscription has 35 variants, which is more than one third. See Behr 2006, 342-343 and 350-351.

[85] Kern 2005, 184.

The most notable differences exist with regard to the first Guofeng Ode “Crying Ospreys” and the first Xiaoya Ode “The Deer Call to One Another” (Mao 161 “Lu ming”). According to the Mao-Zheng *Commentary*, both Odes praise King Wen and the exuberant age under his and his direct successors’ rule, yet in contrast are interpreted as “critiques” (*ci* 刺) by the Three *Odes* Schools; one as having been directed against King Kang (r. 1005/3-978 BCE) and the other as having been written at a time when the “kingly way” had deteriorated.[86] Less dramatic differences concern the Odes “The Boat of Cypress Wood” (Mao 26 “Bo zhou”) and “The Buxom Lady” (Mao 57 “Shi ren”). According to the Three *Odes* Schools, “The Boat of Cypress Wood” is a complaint of a neglected woman, whereas Mao-Zheng take it as a lament of an official because of the neglect which he experienced from his superior. As to “The Buxom Lady”, Mao-Zheng follow the *Zuo Tradition* in considering this Ode as having been written in commiseration of the aforementioned Zhuang Jiang. Yet according to a reading which is attributed to the Lu *Odes* School, the Ode was written by Zhuang Jiang’s governess for didactic purposes.[87] Moreover, in some cases the explanation of certain terms are glaringly different. A case in point is the term *zouyu* 騶虞 (occuring in Mao 25 “Zou yu”), which according to Mao-Zheng denotes a wild beast, whereas the Lu *Odes* School explained it as a term referring to the huntsmen of the prince’s park.[88] Importantly, all these major and minor differences cannot distract from the fact that the four *Odes* “schools” shared the basic assumptions concerning the origin of the Odes and their authoritative compilation by Confucius as well as basic tenets such as e.g. the Odes’ categorization as “praise” and “critique”.

We now take a glance at the structure of the Mao-Zheng *Commentary*. Dividing the Odes into stanzas, it reviews the division of stanzas and the number of each stanza’s lines in a final gloss appended to each Ode. If any information of an Ode’s general meaning or its historical background is given, then mostly in the first gloss. In general, Mao’s and Zheng’s glosses complement each other. Throughout *Zheng’s Expositions*, one can detect Zheng Xuan’s intention to fill up lacunae in the *Mao Commentary*, while deliberately stepping back where Mao's glosses are sufficiently clear. Yet there are also copious minor differences,[89] which range from different glosses of word meanings to divergent opinions concerning the point of view chosen by the Ode's writer, from differences concerning the specification of temporal relations within a poem to quite different interpretations of individual Odes as e.g. in case of "Crying Ospreys".[90]

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[86] Wang Xianqian 1987, 1: 4-8 and 14: 551.

[87] Wang Xianqian 1987, 3A: 126-127 and 3C: 277. Note that the Lu *Odes* School’s reading of “The Buxom Lady” fits much better to the choice of being insribed on a bronze mirror (see above fn. 84).

[88] Wang Xianqian 1987, 2: 120-123.

Both commentaries are characterized by a candid straightforwardness, which dispenses with any discussion of alternative readings or any communication of personal musings. Language and style of the glosses are terse, at times elliptical. The most common linguistic patterns used throughout the glosses are as follows ("A" stands for the *explanandum* and "B" for the *explicatum*; brackets indicate possible omissions and slashes alternative usages):

A / (A) B *ye* 也 / (*ye* 也)	A is B, A connotates B
A / (A) *zhe* 者 B *ye* 也 / (*ye* 也)	"A" is B; "A" connotates B
A / (A) *ci* 此 (*zhe* 者) B *ye* 也 / (*ye* 也)	what is meant by A is B; as to A, B applies; A refers to B
A / (A) *yue* 曰 / *yan* 言 / *wei* 謂 / *yu* 喻 B	A means / expresses, or is expressed by / denotes / exhibits, alludes to B
A *you* 猶 B ye 也	A is like, or equivalent to B
A (*you* 有) *si* 似 B (*ye* 也)	A is (somewhat) similar to B
A B *mao* 貌	A resembles B; A takes on the form of B; A has the appearance of B

"A" is often an unusual term or an obsolete word and often consists of only one character, while "B" is mostly a binome. In rare cases, the *Commentary* considers a character to have been miswritten and suggests a substitute. Equally rare are instances where a regional usage of an expression is assumed.

The *Mao Commentary*'s most conspicious feature concerns the indication of *xing*, "opening evocative impulse". This occurs in 116 cases, usually in the first commentarial gloss of each Ode. Meaning and function of *xing* have been and continue to be subject of a controversial debate.[91] Suffice it here to say that it mostly indicates an image taken from flora and fauna in an Ode's opening lines as e.g. in "Crying Ospreys": "'Fair, fair', cry the ospreys / on the island in the river" (Waley). It was not prior to the Song dynasty (12th cent.) that commentators made use of *xing* and the two complementary notions of *fu*, "narrative description", and *bi*, "simile", in a more systematic way, analyzing each stanza according to these three categories or combinations thereof.

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[89] Huang Zhuo 1985.

[90] Yu 1983, 383-385.

For early *Odes* scholarship the verses marked as *xing* were significant in respect of the plants, animals, and other phenomena of nature often mentioned therein since Confucius had emphasized the didactic usage of the *Odes* as a book of nature, "to become acquainted with the names of all things that creep and fly, grow and flourish" (*Lunyu* 17.9). However, the student who followed Confucius' advice would not have found great help by the Mao-Zheng *Commentary*. Alternative names of plants and animals are frequently given, yet not in all cases, and sometimes it is merely pointed out that this or that is a plant or an animal without giving any further details. Generally, botanical and zoological information is limited to what it needs to grasp the imagery of the Ode under discussion. Scanty as this information is, it nevertheless provided a rudimentary basis of a growing corpus of botanical and zoological knowledge and sometimes even ignited a scholarly discourse on phenomena of nature. A case in point is Zheng Xuan's gloss concerning the sphex's or solitary wasp's prey of a mulberry worm (mentioned in Mao 196 "Xiao wan"), which triggered a debate on the concept of "born by transformation" (*huasheng* 花生) that went on across the centuries.[92] A first step forward to deepen the study of *Odes* botany and zoology was made with the encyclopedic work entitled *An Elucidation of the Plants, Trees, Birds, Beastss, Insectss and Fishes Mentioned in the Odes* (*Mao Shi caomu niaoshou chongyu shu*), whose authorship is ascribed to Lu Ji (261-303).[93]

By and large, Mao-Zheng add little historical and geographical information to what is already been said in the "Small Prefaces," which underlines their importance as an integral and indispensable part of the *Commentary*. In these short introductory notes to each Ode, which range from five to about ninety characters,[94] the general meaning of each Ode is determined by specifying its historical context and categorizing the respective Ode as "praise" (*mei*), "critique" (*ci*), "melancholic longing" (*si*), "longingly contemplating the past" (*sigu*), "admonition" (*gui*), etc.

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[91] Svensson 1996, 10-57.

[92] Needham 1986, 521-528.

[93] For a short description of this work, see Needham 1986, 464-466.

The Prefaces are sparsely annotated by Zheng Xuan but not by Mao. Yet we must assume that the *Mao Commentary* was written in knowledge of the Prefaces. The question of the Prefaces authorship, known as "the number one controversy" of Chinese textual criticism, has plagued scores of Chinese scholars until today.[95] Yet despite all controversy, there is a consensus that the received recension of Prefaces went through the hands of Wei Hong (1st cent. CE), a scholar who lived in the period from the late Western Han to the early Eastern Han dynasty (c. 50 BCE–50 CE), a period which saw the interregnum of the 'usurper' Wang Mang (9-23 CE). In fact, it is noteworthy that the "Small Prefaces" abound with references to this period of transition.[96]

Following the specifications of the "Great Preface" concerning the distinction between "normative" and "deviated" Odes, the Prefaces assign the "normative" Odes to the glorified age of the Western Zhou dynasty's founding and the "deviated" Odes to the era of decline and demise from the end of the Western Zhou dynasty onward (up to c. 600 BCE). In principle, all subsections – fifteen for the Airs of the States, two for the Minor and Major Elegantiae, three for the Hymns – are conceived as arranged in chronological order, which was pictured under the form of a grid. From the specific location within this grid derived each Ode's categorization as "praise", "critique", etc.

To visualize this grid in tabular form was the underlying idea of the *Chronological Tables of the Odes* (*Shipu*), a work which is also attributed to Zheng Xuan. Originally, this work comprised eleven or twelve tables (*pu*) for the Feng Odes, one or two tables for the Ya Odes plus one table for the Song Odes. Each table's timeline was formed by the succession of the Zhou kings or the rulers from the fifteen states or principalities. These tables were complemented by additional notes which contain a wealth of historical information. The tables did not survive, but the appended notes, including an extensive foreword, were handed down in the opening section of the *Maoshi* sub-commentary from the early Tang dynasty.[97]

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[94] The Prefaces to "Qing ren" (Mao 79) and "Dong shan" (Mao 156) contain 83 and 88 characters, respectively. An exception is the Preface to "Liu yue" (Mao 177) with 218 characters, which seems to be a separate text that became integrated into the "Small Prefaces".

[95] A comprehensive survey of this controversy with all its subleties still remains a desideratum.

[96] Mittag 2008, 151-158.

The said foreword in form of a general introduction to the *Odes* surveys the origins of the Odes, their compilation by Confucius, and the organization of the canon and provides detailed notes on the history and geography of the Zhou dynasty and the feudal states of the Airs. Though it presents a consummate summary of early *Odes* scholarship, it has found remarkably little attention.

Concluding remark

It seems fitting to conclude our survey with a reference to this remarkable yet hardly ever mentioned work by Zheng Xuan. We can surmise that the reason for this neglect is to be seen in the fact that the information provided in Zheng's magisterial overview was just taken for granted by the ordinary *Odes* scholars and hence was the least discussed and the least disputed in the commentarial literature. Just because the *Chronological Tables of the Odes* assembled basic assumptions and essential parts of a growing corpus of exegetical knowledge, the *Chronological Tables of the Odes* can be seen as the crowning piece of early *Odes* scholarship. In it, a long process came to rest, which began with the rise of the two approaches referred to as the "aim"-oriented and the "emotions"-centered approach. Ever since *Odes* exegesis and Chinese poetics have spoken an idiom permeated by the conceptions of "aim" or "disposition" (*zhi*) and "emotions" (*qing*).

We should think of these two approaches as a sort of Weberian "ideal types", for in practice they never stood out as clean and distinct from each other as depicted here. On a philosophical level, the reason of their shading off into the other lies in the complex relationship between "character" or "human nature" (*xing* 性) and the "heart-and-mind" (*xin* 心) as the very sources of "aim" or "disposition" and "emotions", respectively.

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[97] For the attempts at reconstruction of the Tables in Song *Odes* scholarship, see Mittag 2004, 204-208.

These two approaches shaped powerful patterns of reading and interpreting the Odes and poetry in general, which in China were paramount throughout the ages and persisted until today, in particular the biographical focus and the scheme of historical contextualization. Yet, first and foremost, their early amalgamation laid the foundation for an exegetical framework which ensured that the Odes, in the centuries to come, would "shine like diamonds in a matrix of commentary and culture."[98]

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3

THE BEGINNING OF SCHOLARSHIP IN HOMERIC EPIC AND THE *ODES*: A COMPARISON[1]

GAO Fengfeng and *LIU Chun*

As has been described in the previous section, both the Homeric poems and the *Book of Songs* came into being from an obscurity about which not much certain is known. Their early scholarship, to a large extent, also grew out of an obscure origin, and a great number of scholarly works were lost. While early Greek scholarship is scattered among a wide variety of works, be they literary, historical, or philosophical, the study and exegesis of the *Odes* in the Han Dynasty are mainly carried out in the context of several "schools" (*jia* 家). It is probably for this reason that, in addition to roughly following a chronological order, Graziosi's survey of Homeric scholarship is organized in such way as to present various perspectives and issues of debate, while Mittag structures his discussion around the "schools". The following comparison aims to trace the common trends in these two independent traditions while marking out their distinctive features.

Commonalities

The first commonality one can observe concerns not the reception of our texts but the texts themselves. The obscurity of their coming into

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[1] We would like to thank Prof. Fritz-Heiner Mutschler for organizing a wonderful and enlightening conference in April 2014 at PKU, and for kindly inviting us to be comparative commentators. We greatly appreciate his great patience during the time when this short essay was sketched. We are also grateful to Prof. Graziosi, Prof. Mittag, and all the other participants for their insightful papers and stimulating discussion.

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being is, to a large extent, a result of their oral origins. The success of the poems in oral form was the basis of their authority and led to the coming into being of the first written versions, with oral performances for quite some time still remaining the decisive form of realization. That is to say, the transition from orality to script, which went hand in hand with the canonization of the texts, was a complicated process.

This situation had its effect on the development of "philological" reception. The first object of such reception was probably the works in their oral form and it evolved during the process of textual fixation, when the poems started to be written down but had not yet found their standardized form (see Graziosi 97-8 on the Homeric expertise of traditional performers of epic, and Mittag 139 on the early oral tradition of the *Odes*).

Nevertheless, the fixation of the texts in writing and the emergence of standardized versions was, of course, an event or rather a process of great significance. It was perceived as such already in antiquity. Both in Greece and in China, there developed stories that attributed to outstanding individuals decisive roles in this process. For instance, we preserve the famous legend about the Athenian tyrant Pisistratus, who decreed that nothing but the Homeric poems and the Homeric poems "in the correct order" should be recited at the Panathenaea, and who allegedly collected those scattered Homeric verses and had scholars prepare a standard edition (Graziosi 89). In China, there is the legendary account of Confucius compiling the three hundred poems of the *Shijng* by selecting from three thousand poems (Sima Qian) or by "trimming" the original corpus of songs (Ban Gu) (Mittag 122).[2] These stories, legendary as they may be, demonstrate that there was, on both sides, an understanding that the final version of the texts was the result of conscious choice and redaction according to specific standards. The role of Pisistratus and Confucius is that of an authoritative protagonist in a process of canonization that was still underway centuries after these two figures lived (that is to say, the activities initiated

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[2] The role of Confucius is obviously more essential than that of Pisisitratus and clearly transcends that of an editor in the technical sense of the word. Mittag speaks of him as "assertor of the *Odes*" (120ff.). In some way, his role is approaching that of an author so that it also could be set in parallel with that of Homer. As the figure of Homer guarantees the authenticity of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, thus the figure of Confucius guarantees the authenticity of the *Shijing*.

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by Pisistratus – for example – are imagined on the model of the Homeric scholars who worked in Alexandria).[3]

Another significant parallel concerns the historical development of Homeric and *Odes* scholarship. In both cases, we can distinguish between a rather extended first phase, during which, so to speak, "free-lance" authors dealt with, reflected upon, and wrote about the Homeric epics and the poems of the *Shijing*, and a second phase, during which – roughly simultaneously – in Greece and in China state-employed scholars were taking care of the classics. As Mittag points out, the Three *Odes* Schools were elevated to official status under the emperors Wendi (r. 179-158 BCE) and Jingdi (r. 158-141 BCE) and were each granted a chair in the Imperial Academy under Emperor Wudi (138).[4] Already a century earlier, the most distinguished philologists had started working at the library of Alexandria as at that of Pergamum, state-sponsored centers of teaching and research (Graziosi

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[3] See Graziosi 89. At least in passing, we would like to point out another, even more concrete, though in terms of chronological development less well matching parallel to the Pisistratus story. In 213 BCE, the First Emperor of the Qin Dynasty had consigned Confucian classics to flames and buried dissident scholars alive. At the same time, he also issued a ban on private possession of classical texts. After the fall of the Qin, this ban was lifted in 191 BCE by Emperor Huidi, the second emperor of the Han Dynasty (r. 210-188 BCE). During Emperor Wudi's reign (r. 141-87 BCE), an imperial edict was issued, probably in 124 BCE, to encourage the public to donate their private collections to the imperial library（*zhao tianxia xian shu* 詔天下獻書). But even prior to this official call for books that had been scattered and lost, emperor Wudi's half-brother, Prince Xian of Hejian (河間獻王, died 130 or 129 BCE), had already been known as a bibliophile and book hunter. According to his biography in the *Hanshu* (the imperial history of the former Han Dynasty), Prince Xian, probably on his own initiative, had aggressively sought those banned classical works that had been secretly preserved by private citizens. When rare books were brought to his attention, Prince Xian would have these lost texts copied at his own court. Then, he would keep the original copy himself and give the replica back to the original owner. He would also bestow a considerable amount of money on the owners as compensation, a detail that can remind us of the Pisistratus legend. Interestingly, it is precisely due to Prince Xian that the Mao recension of the *Odes* with commentary was preserved.

[4] The significance of the official *Odes* scholarship was certainly augmented still further after the capital's moving to Luoyang in Wang Mang's interregnum and the successive Eastern Han Dynasty.

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102ff.). Concerning teaching, which was of enormous importance for the cultural impact of the texts, we have – again in both cases – to reckon with a comparable development from contingent and unregulated to institutionalized and more regimented forms, even though the specific phases of transition are almost impossible to reconstruct.

Finally, and in our context most importantly, we can distinguish similar levels of actual scholarship on the Greek and the Chinese side. There was first the level of literal understanding of the wording of the text. Once the Homeric epics and the *Odes* had been handed down for a certain period of time, problems of understanding necessarily arose. Thus, the explanation of unusual words became a fundamental task of "philological" reception. Accordingly, in a fragment of Aristophanes, a father imitating a school master asks his son about the meaning of difficult words (Graziosi 96), while in a passage of the *Analects*, Confucius states that "from the *Odes* we become largely acquainted with the names of all things that creep and fly, grow and flourish" (Mittag 141). This agrees with the fact that, as far as we can judge, the ancient commentaries on the Homeric epics and the *Shijing* contained a significant amount of word by word explanation.

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On a second level, close analysis of the texts led to more systematic thinking about linguistic and stylistic phenomena, as we can see from the grammatical studies of people like Democritus or Protagoras (Graziosi 97) or the idea of the "Six Modes" (*liushu* 六術) (probably three modes of expression and three genres) that is propounded in the "Great Preface" (Mittag 135).

The third level of interpretation was, of course, that of the general meaning of the texts. Of particular concern for the interpreters were passages that were perceived to present ideological or aesthetic problems.[5] For us, it is of interest that we can observe comparable strategies and practices with which the interpreters reacted to these problems (see below 156ff.).

This kind of discussion entailed, on both sides, reflections on the proper standards of interpretation and the elaboration of theories of poetry. The distinction between extrinsic and intrinsic criteria for literary criticism, Plato's attack on poetry, and Aristotle's poetics of *katharsis* (Graziosi 99f.) belong here, as well as the different Chinese theories concerning *zhi* (aim, intention) and *qing* (emotions) with regard to their realization in poetry (*shi*) (Mittag passim). We have here, in both cases, relatively developed methodological and poetological ideas, which for centuries influenced European and Chinese literature and literary criticism.[6]

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[5] In the Homeric epics, these were particularly passages concerning the gods, in the *Shijing,* particularly the poems concerned with love.

Differences

The commonalities described underline the cultural significance of the two text corpora. They also could serve as material if one wanted to elaborate a general theory of the coming into being of a Classic. But here we want to take them only as the backdrop against which we can now try to characterize certain distinctive features of the two traditions.

The first one concerns the role of the oral performance of the texts, which, as we have pointed out, was equally important for the reception of the Homeric epics and the *Shijing*. One should, however, be aware that this oral performance was embedded in different social frameworks in the two cases. Performances of the Homeric epics – apart from private gatherings about which we have only little knowledge – took place at the public festivals celebrated in the Greek communities with the citizen body – and indeed also, in all likelihood, women, children, resident aliens, and foreign visitors – as audience. Their main purpose was cultural entertainment at religious festivals, such as the Panathenaea. Performances of the *Song* and a good part of the *Ya* – given their highly disputed social background the *Guofeng* must be left aside for the moment – took place on state occasions in front of a limited audience of dignitaries, removed from public sight. They played an important part in the religious ritual proper.

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The fact that the *Odes* are more closely correlated with the political sphere than the Homeric poems is also apparent in another respect. Through the mobility of the rhapsodes, the Homeric epics quickly became "Panhellenic". Unhindered by political borders, they reached all parts of the Greek-speaking world, and soon were regarded as common cultural treasure. The *Odes*, by contrast, were connected with the Zhou realm and reflected mainly the northern tradition, without including features of the Chu culture in the South. Though China, very differently from archaic and classical Greece, had a long history of central government, culturally, the *Odes* were not representative of the whole Chinese-speaking area.[7]

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[6] On the history of these ideas, see Zhang 1992, passim.

If we turn from the poems themselves to their reception, our subject proper, and look first at the agents involved, we can observe a difference that seems related to what we have just discussed. The Greek situation is characterized by the fact that, from early on, many different kinds of people dealt with the Homeric poems and used them to make their point. The rhapsodes presented them and probably offered explanations and background information (e.g. Graziosi 98). Philosophers like Xenophanes and Heraclitus attacked Homer for his ideas of men and gods, while others tried to defend him by interpreting problematic passages allegorically (Graziosi 92f.). Politicians used the Homeric text as an argument in "international" conflicts (Graziosi 95). Teachers of rhetoric offered descriptions of linguistic and stylistic phenomena (Graziosi 99). Plato and Aristotle developed their theories of poetry with reference to the Homeric epics (Graziosi 99f.).

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[7] David Hawkes talks about the dual ancestry of Chinese poetry, one Northern and one Southern, which corresponds roughly to the two poetic functions: the expression of men's feelings as social beings and the expression of their feelings as isolated individual souls. On this, and the use of "Northern" and "Southern" as relative terms, see Minford and Lau 2000, 238. Chu, the kingdom that occupied the stomach of China, whose power once rivaled that of Qin, and whose people constituted the main force in the subversion of the Qin Dynasty, once boasted distinctive rituals, mentalities, and literary traditions as opposed to those of the north. Yet, it is a repressed culture, with the conquest of Qin and, more importantly, with Confucianism becoming the orthodox culture, which frowned upon anything concerning "the strange, the powerful, the chaotic, and the divine" (*guai li luan shen* 怪力乱神). Although even today Shamanism is still practiced in Chu area of China, it never constituted a dominating influence in Chinese literary tradition. Shamanism, as an old religion of China, was dethroned and driven into the countryside when Confucianism became a state orthodoxy. The shift actually began during the Zhou society, which was more secular and whose religious impulses were more restrained. During the fourth and third centuries BCE, the shamanism of Chu seemed outlandish and bizarre to its Northern neighbors. The existing poems recorded in the *Chuci*, the Songs of the South, fall into two categories: the more functional, explicitly Shamanistic ones, in which the presence of an individual poet is not seen, and the more personal, confessional or self revelatory ones, in which Shamanism is only a background. See Hawkes 1985, 15-30.

While the socio-political framework of Homeric scholarship was very wide and its agents varied considerably, the socio-political framework of *Odes*-scholarship was rather uniform and the agents represented more or less one type of scholar. Confucius, Mengzi and Xunzi, to take Mittag's three protagonists of *Odes* scholarship before its official institutionalization, were all three state-oriented thinkers, who for longer or shorter periods served as ministers or political advisers and throughout their lives reflected about how best to organize the individual and social life of man.

In accordance with this, the orientation of early Homeric and *Odes* scholarship differed as well. If we look at the level of content-related interpretation, we can state that Homeric scholarship discussed theological, ethical, cosmological, political, rhetorical, and aesthetic questions, while *Odes* scholarship, for the most part, centered on the moral significance of the poems (Mittag 120-8).

As we said above, the state-sponsored Homeric studies at the royal libraries in Alexandria and Pergamum and the establishment of chairs for the *Odes* schools at the Imperial academy in Chang'an constitute a striking parallel in the development of Homeric and *Odes* scholarship. Yet, in this case, too, one divergence should not be overlooked. Just as two or three centuries earlier "the [Athenian] tyrants invited the rhapsodes to perform and gave them considerable institutional support for their work, but did so in order to promote the Panhellenic dimension of their festival, rather than contentious local interests" (Graziosi 95), the cultural engagement of the Hellenistic kings seems not to have served specific political interests but to have been a question of general prestige. Therefore, the holders of power had no interest in influencing the scholarly work of their star philologists. In contrast, the elevation of the *Odes* schools to official status and the establishment of the chairs do seem to have had a clear political aim: the stabilization of imperial rule through the propagation of specific ethico-political tenets. Thus, in this case, the interpretation of the texts did constitute a matter of concern for the rulers and their administrators.

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Here, too, at least to a certain extent, the actual scholarship correlates with the socio-political framework. So, we can say that the Alexandrian scholars had a penchant for technical, philological argument while the Han scholars had a more pronounced interest in issues of value. It is probably no coincidence that the energy and methodological consciousness with which people like Zenodotus and Aristarchus dedicated themselves to the constitution of the texts (Graziosi 102f.) do not have a full equivalent on the Chinese side, while the Han scholars are conspicuous in their continuous effort to interpret the *Odes* in an ethically correct way. We will come back to this latter point in a moment. First, we just want to point out that a detailed analysis of the preserved scholia and commentaries on the Homeric poems and the *Shijing* would be a promising project that could yield interesting results and lead to a more precise picture of the interests and procedures of the Alexandrian and Han commentators and the principles underlying their work.[8]

In the final section of our essay, we will return to a problem already touched upon: the interpretative strategies and practices applied by the Greek and Chinese interpreters when dealing with passages that were problematic in terms of contents and values. This will also give us the opportunity to say a little more about the theoretical reflections of our exegetes.

In Homeric interpretation, the major concern of various critics from Pre-Socratic philosophers to Hellenistic interpreters was the problem of gods. Since the *Iliad* is fraught with passages that fail to meet the moral standards of later ages, the tension between Homeric anthropomorphism and more rigorous moral expectations gave rise to early theological critique. Xenophanes, for example, launched a vehement attack on the moral lapses of the Olympian gods (Graziosi 91f.), Plato banned Homer from his ideal polis for the same reason – and in addition was generally skeptical of poetry as a copy of the copy – the sensible world – of the true reality – the forms (Graziosi 99). Yet there were also defenders of the poet. They applied two strategies. Theagenes, if we believe Porphyry's account, is the first one to contrive a hermeneutical device to find new meanings in the embarrassing passages (Graziosi 92f.). Later on, Stoic philosophers claimed to have detected profound philosophical truth and insights in the Homeric epics, as if Homer were a proto-Stoic (cf. Cicero, *De natura deorum* 1.41). The use of allegory or hidden meaning could grant the Homeric epics

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[8] Another rewarding undertaking could consist in a systematic investigation of the independent studies that were stimulated by Homeric and *Odes* scholarship, like the linguistic and grammatical studies mentioned by Graziosi (96f.) and the botanical and zoological studies mentioned by Mittag (141). It would be of interest to see which kinds of studies came into being in this way, what were their contents, their methods, and their results.

intellectual dignity, while preserving their literary surface.[9] The second strategy of defense was that of Aristotle. The philosopher "insisted that poetry needed to be judged against the aim of poetry, and not according to some other criterion" (Graziosi 99). Though Aristotle agreed with Plato concerning the ontological status of poetry, and like Xenophanes found the Homeric representation of the gods neither true nor plausible, he "still suggested that they should be considered in relation to the main aim of poetry, namely that of 'effecting, through pity and fear, the catharsis of those emotions'" (Graziosi 100). In this way, he followed already the principle "to elucidate Homer from Homer", which later seems to have been elaborated by the Alexandrian philologist Aristarchus (Graziosi 106).

If we turn to exegesis of the *Odes*, we find a different scenario. Mittag delineates the trajectory of the *Odes* commentary tradition. In the pre-Han tradition, for example, in the *Analects*, Confucius shows his concern with the correct musical performance of the *Odes* in ceremonies as well as its didactic function. The collection is taken as a repository of maxims and precepts for moral conduct and gains the status of an authoritative text.[10] Meanwhile, we see the development, in *Odes* scholarship, of the "aim"-oriented approach, which understood the poem from the its communicative aim, and of the "emotion"-oriented approach, which understood the poem as the expression of emotions. The two approaches later converged into one. All three approaches have in common that they see the poem embedded in a specific situation, a specific constellation of persons that has to be known if the poem's meaning is to be understood.

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This is the scenario that led to the interpretive strategy by which the commentaries addressed the problem of morally objectionable poems. Since, on the one hand, the authority of the *Odes* was a given and therefore simple rejection not possible and, on the other hand, the fact that the poems are embedded in concrete situations did not facilitate allegory qua transposition into a different discourse, the way out was

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[9] This later development of interpretation was motivated, not by an impulse to save Homer from the bombardments of moral puritans, but rather by the wish to provide his poems with intellectual profundity.

[10] Almost all the interpreters worked from the assumption formulated by Confucius (*Analects* 2.2): "The Master said, 'As to the Three Hundred Odes, there is one saying that covers what the Odes are all about – there is no improper thinking' (*si wu xie*)."

"allegory within the same discourse", the discourse of historicity. A look at the only fully preserved commentary can concretize what we have in mind.

The Mao School Commentary, including the earlier traditions preserved in this line, is characterized by philological rigor and a strong historicizing tendency. The commentary is packed with terse glosses. But philology is only half the story, for it can clarify the meaning of obscure words, but cannot provide an overall interpretation for each poem. The quintessential Mao School approach is represented in the so-called "Small Prefaces" preceding each ode, which are designed to align each text with a specific historical event or figure. As a result, each poem is safely anchored in a concrete historical situation. This strong historicizing tendency can be felt particularly in the interpretation of the *Guofeng* section, where many odes were presumably folksongs and do not carry specific references to any identifiable event. Therefore, it takes a great deal of exegetical ingenuity to find the "right" event and then to read it back into an otherwise innocent text. Take "Qiang Zhongzi" Mao 76, for example. The literal meaning of the poem is pretty straightforward: a girl is warning her lover, asking him to stay away from her because she is afraid of being scolded by her parents, her brothers, and her community. In the Mao School commentary, the poem is interpreted as a veiled criticism of Duke Zhuang, who defeated his treacherous brother in 743 BCE. In Mao's reading, it is the Duke who is addressing his ministers, asking them not to meddle with his family feud. This example can demonstrate how the "Small Prefaces" can impose a historical and political reading on otherwise non-political texts.

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From our perspective, many interpretations of this kind in the Mao tradition are over-stretched and procrustean, for they jar with the apparent meaning of the texts. Moreover, we can identify a strong propensity to treat the *Odes* as overtly political texts referring to real historical events. Particularly in the *Guofeng* section, poems are categorized as either paeans to virtuous rulers or harsh critiques of moral impropriety. We are not surprised to find that, when each Confucian classic is assigned a fixed practical function in the Han Dynasty, the *Book of Odes* is often invoked as a source book upon which devoted ministers would draw to express their expostulations to their emperor or prince. One of the explicit political uses of the Odes, therefore, is to provide proof texts for moral admonition. This impulse to historicize and politicize the interpretation of the *Odes* is not what we would normally find in Homer interpretation. In the case of Homeric epic, various interpretative schemes are created to replace the morally inadequate Olympian gods with cosmological forces or psychological entities, or with parts of the human body (Theagenes, Metrodorus). But in the Mao School commentary, interpretation of individual odes is largely oriented towards turning poetry into history. This does not imply that Homer never received ideological interpretations; yet, the Mao School Commentary is predominantly historical and political, which poses a contrast to the kind of allegorizing that we find in Homeric scholarship (and which, by the way, represented there but one strand among several, and not even the most important one).

If we address ourselves to the origin of the Mao school tradition, we may ask what cultural forces and historical contingencies are combined to produce this history-oriented interpretation of the *Odes*. In Homer's case, allegorical interpretation comes into being mostly as a response to theological criticism. If the origin of this mode of interpretation can be traced back to an early confrontation between Xenophanes and Theagenes, between those Pre-Socratic philosophers who condemn anthropomorphism and immorality and apologists who try to exonerate Homer from these accusations, then, can we find a similar clash of ideas in the formative stage of the *Odes*, a clash that would induce some early interpreters to allocate a specific historical context to each ode? Are there controversies and polemics that lead to the genesis of the Mao School interpretation? Mittag mentions (143) that the "Small Prefaces" abound with references to the transitional period from the late Western Han to the early Eastern Han (c. 50 BCE-50 CE), and resonate with the contemporary discourse dominated by the efforts of the "usurper" Wang Mang (45 BCE-23 CE) to legitimize his regency and his eventual seizure of the throne. It is possible that some opportunist interpreters could tamper with the existing texts of the prefaces for propaganda purposes, but the historicizing approach characteristic of the Mao school does not have to be bound so closely with the regency period and could well be traced back to some earlier, pre-Han exchanges of ideas.

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1

HOMER IN GREEK CULTURE FROM THE ARCHAIC TO THE HELLENISTIC PERIOD[*]

Glenn W. MOST

This is the face of Homer as some ancient Greek sculptors imagined him at two different historical moments, once at the end of the Archaic Period (Ill.1) and again in the middle of the Hellenistic Period (Ill.2).[1] The archaic bust (Ill.1) is preserved in the Glyptothek in Munich, the Hellenistic one (Ill.2) in the Capitoline Museum in Rome. Modern archaeologists distinguish between these two styles of Homer portraits as the Epimenides type, which goes back to a postulated original that they date to about 460 BCE (Ill.1), and the so-called Hellenistic, blind type, which is thought to derive from an original that is customarily dated to sometime about 200 BCE (Ill.2). Thus, even if the surviving copies were all produced much later than the original portrait busts that presumably served as their models, the dates postulated for those lost originals can be used to demarcate the chronological limits of the period that will concern us here: from the boundary between the Archaic and Classical Periods in the early fifth century BCE until the middle of the Hellenistic Period in the second century BCE.

We moderns, trained as we are in the academic practice of historicizing art history and criticism, are likely to notice above all the stylistic differences between these two portrait styles; but the ancient Greeks seem never to have felt the slightest difficulty in recognizing both of them, different though they manifestly are, as Homer. If so, that is certainly not because these busts were in fact the realistic portraits of some particular person named "Homer" of whom the artists themselves (let alone the viewers) could possibly ever have had any kind of direct

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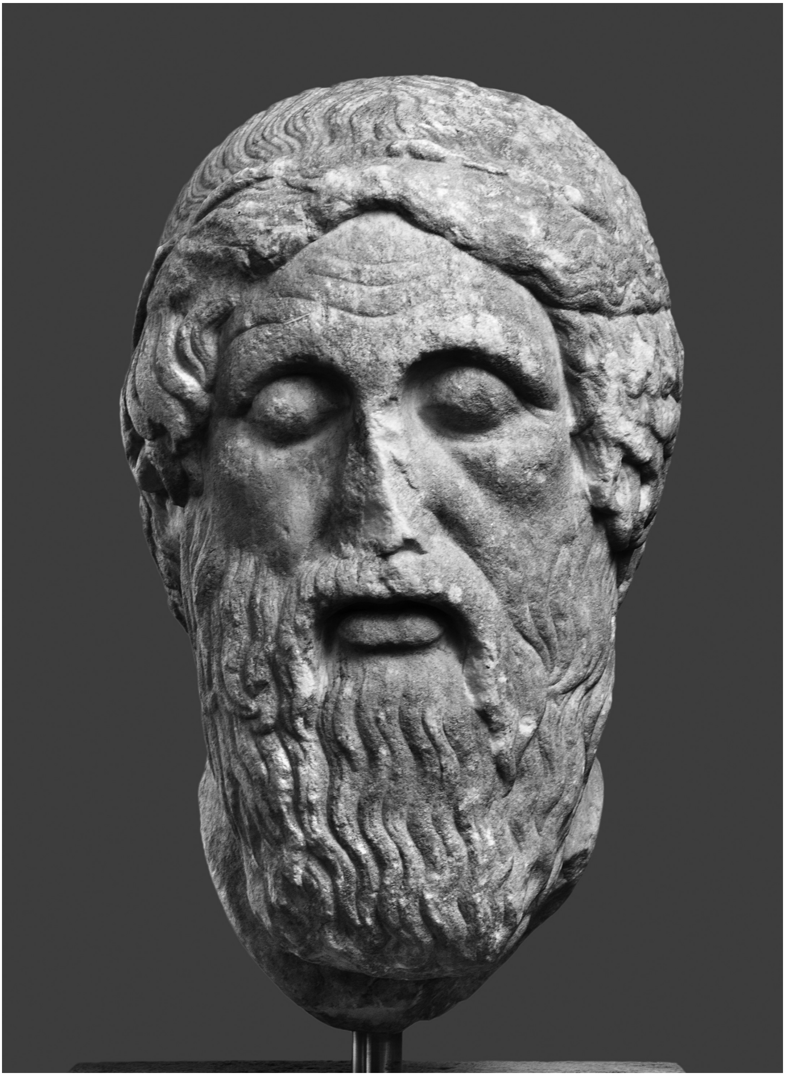
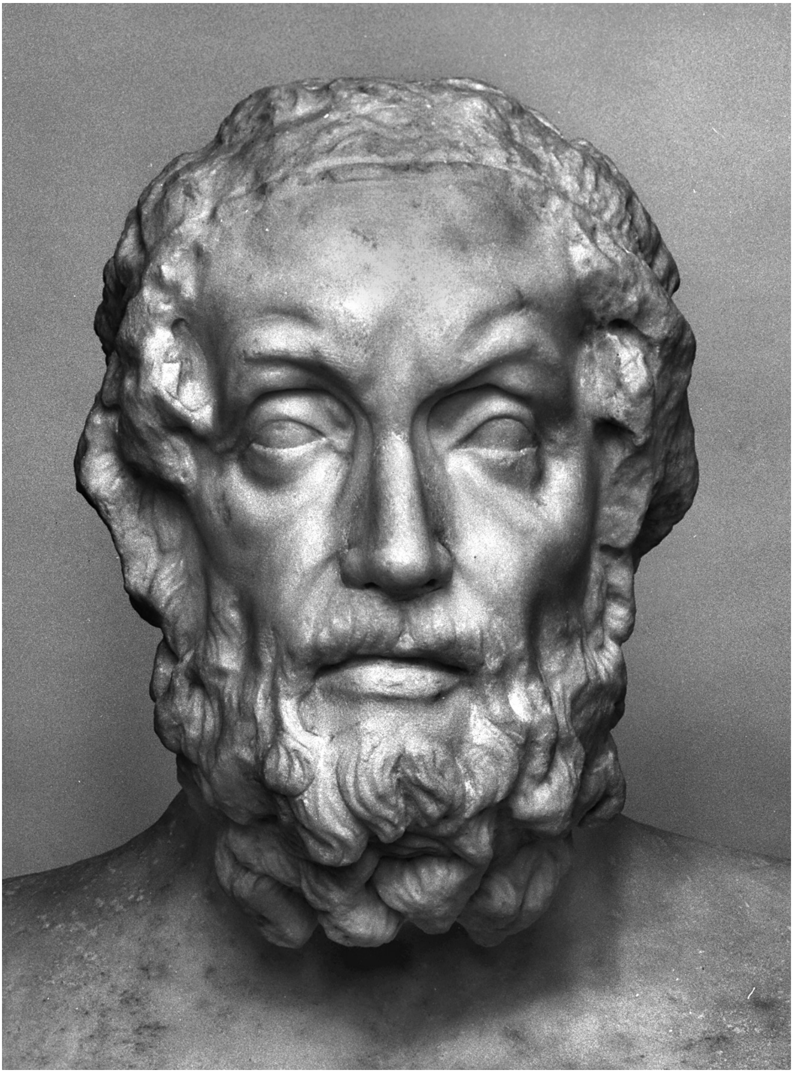
[*] Earlier versions of certain parts of this essay were published in Most 1990 and in Santoni 2004, 1-14.

[1] See Richter 1984, 139ff.



Ill.1: Image of Homer, ca. 460 BCE (Glyptothek Munich; photo: R. Kühling)



Ill.2: Image of Homer, ca. 200 BCE (Musei Capitolini, Roma; photo: B. Malter; http://arachne.unikoeln.de/item/marbilder/1456238)

or indirect visual experience – indeed, if they are the more or less realistic representation of any real person at all, that person could not possibly have been Homer himself, but at most could only have been the (for us, entirely anonymous) sitter whom the sculptor used as his model. Given the lapse of centuries between the probable lifetime of Homer and the date of even the earlier of the two original prototypes of these portraits, and given the manifest impossibility of preserving any accurate knowledge of Homer's true appearance over the course of those centuries, there could obviously have been no possibility whatsoever, and hence no obligation at all, for the artist to represent Homer as he really did look in reality: the sculptor's only obligation was to represent the person as his culture supposed that he *must* have looked.

Thus, the portraits show Homer not as he really did look but as his culture thought he *must* have looked. That is why, in these portraits of Homer, there is not a single detail that is not charged with significance. In every regard, the mode of representation indicates what the artist, and his culture, took to be appropriate to Homer as they understood him; hence, we may interpret these portraits as a whole and in every detail, even the slightest, as an allegory of what Homer meant for the culture of ancient Greece. The blind eyes not only identify him as the blind Homer but also indicate his withdrawal from the superficial banalities of our everyday existence toward a higher, invisible realm of poetic truth to which he alone has access, not through physical sight but through memory and imagination. We look at him, but he does not deign to return our gaze; instead, he looks through us, beyond us, above us. The lines on his forehead indicate a profound concentration of intellectual effort. The thick, luxuriant hair expresses his physical force and vigor, and compensates for the evident signs of age in his hollow cheeks; while the careful ordering of his hair suggests how much art and skill he has devoted to turning this natural vitality into a formally perfect work of art, a *kosmos*. The fillet that binds the hair belongs normally to priests: the wisdom of this poet is not of this world, but belongs to the gods. The beard is an expression of great age and hence of experience and authority; but the mustache is carefully trimmed to make sure that the mouth, with its full bottom lip, is not at all obscured: it is from that slightly opened mouth that the poet's eternal wisdom, the images of the other world to which he has a privileged access, flow forth to reach us.

For the Greeks, these portraits of Homer, however much they differed from one another and however stylized they all were, were nonetheless thought to be portraits of some one single person who, they thought, had once really existed. It should be noted that it is neither self-evident nor universal to believe, as the ancient Greeks did, that the texts they admired not only presupposed the existence of a specific author who composed them but also that this author could, and indeed must, be conceived of as an individual person imaginable down to the details of his physical appearance – in this regard, as in others, Chinese culture offers a striking contrast.[2] For the Greeks, the portraits might be fictional, but Homer himself was thought not to have been a fiction. These busts were the best that artists could do to represent a real person as they thought he must have been. That is, they thought that there had really been a Homer, and that the difficulties in portraying him derived exclusively from the scarcity and uncertainty of the information that had been transmitted to them about him. So too for the linguistic counterpart to these sculptured busts, the written and oral accounts of Homer's biography that circulated in antiquity. Where was Homer born? Throughout antiquity, there was a great deal of uncertainty concerning Homer's birthplace, as indeed about all the other details of his life – the names of his father and mother, the exact times when he lived, the details of his youth and maturity, and old age and death. But this did not prevent various biographies from being written, which then went on to be transmitted in numerous manuscripts, where they are usually attributed pseudonymously to celebrated authors of histories or biographies like Herodotus or Plutarch.[3] No doubt these accounts were considered to be fictional by some readers in antiquity, but they seem always to have been considered to be the fictionalized biographies of some one real person who had once really lived and had really been named Homer.

But even if the real empirical vicissitudes and character of the historical person of Homer were lost to cultural memory very early and were replaced by the chimeras and will-o'-the-wisps of legend, the poems of Homer retained a massive presence and centrality that not only dominated but even defined all of Greek culture from beginning to end, and, in particular, during the four or so centuries under consideration here, from the Archaic Period until the Hellenistic Age. But to understand these developments, we must first make two preliminary remarks.

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[2] See especially Beecroft 2010.

[3] See, for example, Keaney and Lamberton 1996.

The first is that what we tend to think of as the written texts of Homer's poems were much more effectively present throughout this period in oral than in written form. To be sure, by the end of this period, the efforts of generations of scholars at the library of the Ptolemies in Alexandria – above all, Zenodotus, Aristophanes of Byzantium, and Aristarchus – had resulted in the production of authoritative written texts, critical editions of Homer's poetry that were to provide a secure foundation for all later written versions of his poem in ancient Greek and for all later translations of his poetry in all other languages.[4] The success of these critical editions can be measured in the differences between the surviving early Ptolemaic Homeric papyri and later ones: for the earlier papyri offer texts of the poems that differ markedly (to some extent, in individual readings, but even more so in the number of verses) from both later papyri and the medieval manuscripts that lie at the basis of our modern editions, whereas the later papyri offer, by and large, the very same texts with which we are familiar.[5] The Alexandrian editions were widely diffused throughout the Hellenistic and Roman worlds and served as the texts used by schoolteachers, students, authors, and other cultured readers during the following centuries.

And yet, even in the Hellenistic and Roman periods, when literary culture as a whole had become predominantly literate, Homer's poems continued to be enjoyed in oral performances in public at festivals and competitions, and in private at symposia and family gatherings. But at the beginning of the period we are examining, matters were reversed: the basic mode of existence of Homer's poems in the archaic age was oral, and writing seems to have played little or no role in their performance and propagation until a very late date. There can be little doubt that the heroic poems of ancient Greece were originally conceived and developed in purely oral terms, in the course of generations of oral composition and transmission by a succession of bards and rhapsodes. There is only one enigmatic reference to writing in the whole of the *Iliad* (6.168), ominously describing a letter as being written in "baleful signs," and the whole plot of the *Odyssey* depends upon not only the absence but even the inconceivability of written communications. And yet, it is hard to imagine anyone having had the idea to put together smaller oral poems, well adapted for oral performance, into the monumental form of our *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, with their tens of thousands of verses, except under the stimulus of the advent of writing; and, indeed, many scholars have postulated that the Greek alphabet was either invented for the sake of memorializing Homer's poetry or, at least, played an early and decisive role in its formalization.[6] Where, then, does one draw the historical line between Homer's poetry as being a fundamentally oral phenomenon and a fundamentally written one? Speculation and controversy on this question have marked Homeric studies since Friedrich August Wolf's *Prolegomena to Homer*[7] of 1795 and they have not abated in our own day. Even today, some scholars suppose that the textual variants transmitted in papyri, manuscripts, and scholia represent precious traces of the fundamentally oral performance of the poems until the Hellenistic period[8]; others believe that they are the results of the pernicious errors already committed by copyists and readers in very early times.[9]

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[4] Pfeiffer 1968 remains the fundamental account.

[5] See, for example, Stephanie West 1967.

The second preliminary remark is that, during this period, the question of just which poems were to be attributed to Homer underwent a gradual evolution and restriction. At the beginning of the Archaic Age, the term Homer refers indifferently to all poetic compositions in hexameter verse narrating the exploits of heroes from the legendary past. In the course of the following centuries, the two epics we call Homeric, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, were gradually separated out as qualitatively different from the mass of other extant heroic narratives referred to as the Cyclic epics. We can follow this process step by step. The early fifth century BCE lyric poet Simonides names Homer only once[10] – to refer to an episode found not in the *Iliad* or *Odyssey* but in one of the Cyclic epics. At about the same time, another lyric poet, Pindar, quotes Homer once by name[11] – but the line he quotes as Homeric is, in fact, found in the texts of neither our *Iliad* nor our *Odyssey*. The first surviving attempt to differentiate Homer from the Cyclic poets was made by the later fifth century historian Herodotus,[12] who pointed out a contradiction between the account of Helen and Paris' voyage from Sparta to Troy as presented in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, and the one in the Cyclic epic called the *Cypria*. Herodotus cites the various written passages, juxtaposes and analyzes them, applying the methods of the historian or lawyer to texts he treats not as arbitrary fictions but as serious witnesses to real events in the historical past, and concludes from the conflict of their testimony that the same author could not have been responsible for both accounts. It is the fourth century BCE philosopher Plato who first makes a systematic distinction between Homer and all the Cyclic poets – but only by implication: Plato refers to Homer very frequently, but, without exception, he always draws his quotations from the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*; the Cyclic epics he never even deigns to mention. This cannot be because he did not know them, but only because he had recognized that they could not be by Homer. How he arrived at this insight we do not know (although we can make a good guess on the basis of some of his dialogues, particularly the *Phaedrus*).[13] It was left to his student, the fourth century BCE philosopher Aristotle, to formulate for the first time the literary critical criteria by which such a distinction could be made. In his *Poetics*, he notes repeatedly that Homer's works have a higher degree of unity of action than do the epics dealing with the exploits of Heracles and Theseus or than such Cyclic epics as the *Cypria* and the *Little Iliad*.[14] Thus, by the second half of the fourth century BCE, the Greeks had reduced the number of works assigned to Homer from the whole mass of heroic epic to just two poems; and thereby they had made it easier to determine the outlines of a single authorial personality who could be defined not merely by his content (tales of whatever sort about legendary heroic actions), but also by his particular aesthetic taste and tendencies. And in the following centuries, the process of reduction was pushed even further by the so-called *Chorizontes*, who denied that the same poet Homer had written both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* and who maintained instead that one poet had written one of these epics and a different one the other one. So, in general, we must be cautious, whenever we speak of Homer during this whole period, to avoid presupposing that the poems of his in question were simply the very same ones that we ascribe to him nowadays, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.

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[6] E.g. Powell 1991.

[7] Conveniently available in Grafton, Most, and Zetzel 1985.

[8] So most prolifically Gregory Nagy, see e.g. Nagy 1996a, 1996b, 2003, 2004, and elsewhere.

[9] So e.g. M. L. West 2001.

[10] Simonides, Fragment 564.4 Page.

[11] Pindar, *Pythian Ode* 4.277.

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[12] Herodotus, *Histories* 2.116-17.

[13] Perhaps, as Margalit Finkelberg suggests to me, this indicates that in Athenian schools of the fifth century BCE the only Homeric epics taught were the ones that were recited at the Panathenaic festival, namely, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey.*

[14] Aristotle, *Poetics,* chapters 8, 23.

Having cleared up these preliminary questions, let us now turn to the role of Homer in Greek culture of this period, discussing this large and complex phenomenon in terms of two key concepts, citation and pedagogy.

By citation, I mean the modes of propagation and dissemination of Homer's poetry and thought, above all, in terms of verbal quotation but also, more widely, in those of allusion, reminiscence, parody, and all the other modes of overt and covert intertextuality. Given the centrality of Homer's poems within Greek culture, it is not surprising that his language and modes of argumentation recur in all sectors of that culture, even in those that seem most critical of the values and ideas expressed in his poetry. That is, in Greek culture one can adopt Homer's views, modify them, or reject them – but even if an author chose not simply to adopt them, he had no choice but to use Homer's own language in modifying or rejecting them. For, given the audience's familiarity with Homer, there was no other equally convenient and effective bridge of communication that the later author could use – even if his intention were to transport very un-Homeric contents across that bridge.

By pedagogy, in turn, I mean the values outside of the world of Homer's poems that those poems were used for by later Greeks in order to communicate, legitimate, and establish them. Homer, of course, intends not only to delight but also to instruct – or rather, to delight instructively and to instruct delightfully.[15] It is no accident that what the Sirens, those demonic figures of oral epic poetry whom Odysseus encounters during his wanderings in the *Odyssey*, use in order to beguile their doomed listeners is the promise that these latter will become wiser, since these goddesses know not only all the sufferings of the Greeks and the Trojans at Troy (that is, the full archive of the Trojan legend presupposed and only very partially excerpted by Homer himself), but also everything else that happens on earth (that is, all the other Greek heroic legends).[16] But the instruction that Homer himself proposes as the goal of his poetry consists only partially in a simple commemoration of the great deeds of the Trojan War that would otherwise be lost to forgetfulness, significant though these doubtless are; his larger aim is surely rather to transmit both positive and negative models of ethical comportment and of discursive engagement within the context of a view of human life as a whole in which its fundamentally tragic dimension does not quite exclude possibilities for at least temporary happiness, generosity, love, and renown. It was this view, above all, that fascinated later Greek readers and teachers and that led to Homer's poems being themselves applied to further and, for him doubtless quite unimaginable, pedagogical goals within both established educational institutions like schools and private as well as public programs of the improvement of self and of others.

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[15] Cf. Horace, *Ars Poetica* lines 333-4.

[16] Homer, *Odyssey* 12.189-92.

Thus, we may consider citation to be a way of designating the general category of the circulation of Homer's linguistic vehicle, and pedagogy that of the circulation of his moral values and conceptual content.

The standard location for this circulation during the Archaic and Classical periods was the local or regional religious festival. In the Homeric poems themselves, epic poetry is performed by bards, like Demodocus and Phemius, during banquets at the palaces of kings (and also by Achilles for himself when he is alone in his tent at Troy); but this is doubtless just as little a reflection of the true circumstances that prevailed during the latest phases of its composition and transmission, and just as much a mixture of memory, nostalgia, and fantasy, as are such incongruous artifacts as the war-chariots in which Homeric heroes drive up to the battlefront, only to jump down onto the ground once they have arrived, and then fight hand-to-hand duels with one another. As the royal palace organization of Mycenaean times gave way to the small kingdoms of the Dark Age, and then to the polis city-state during the course of the Archaic period, those kingly banquets disappeared but, astonishingly, the oral poetic traditions continued – but now they had to find new locations, and the cities and temples provided festivals that were quite suitable for this purpose. All cities and major temples celebrated such festivals regularly – they were a standard feature of local and religious calendars – and these provided the Greeks with an opportunity not only to honor a god but also to get together, celebrate, have fun, and listen to poetic and musical competitions. But in these festivals, the oral epic tradition found itself in new circumstances to which it had to adapt if it was to continue to flourish. While the royal banquet had largely been restricted to the nobility, the festivals were open to most free Greeks and even, sometimes, to some foreigners; while the palace culture had been centered upon the glorification of the king, the festivals had a more or less serious religious justification as well; and while the heroic performers of the legendary age were engaging in the creative composition and transformation of the epic songs they sang, those in the Archaic period seem to have become largely rather mechanical memorizers and repeaters of more or less authoritative versions of those songs – that is, the performers who had once been bards became rhapsodes. In short, what had once been a purely fluid, oral situation of composition and performance became petrified into the repeated presentation of a fixed, written, canonized text.

The so-called *Homeric Hymns*, of which a corpus of thirty-three texts has been transmitted,[17] may well provide some evidence for these festivals, for at least some of them were probably performed at such festivals before the recitation of heroic epics. Some idea of what these festivals might have been like is provided above all by the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*, which was probably composed in the sixth century BCE.[18] The anonymous author claims that Apollo loves Delos most of all:

> where the Ionians with trailing robes assemble with their children and wives on your [i.e. Apollo's] avenue, and when they have seated the gathering they think of you and entertain you with boxing, dancing, and singing. A man might think they were the unaging immortals if he came along then when the Ionians are all together: he would take in the beauty of the whole scene, and be delighted at the spectacle of the men and the fair-girt women, the swift ships and the people's piles of belongings. And besides, this great wonder, the fame of which will never perish: the Maidens of Delos, the servants of the Far-shooter, who, after first hymning Apollo, and then in turn Leto and Artemis profuse of arrows, turn their thoughts to the men and women of old and sing a song that charms the peoples. They know how to mimic all people's voices and their babble; anyone might think it was he himself were speaking, so well is their singing constructed.[19]

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[17] Now conveniently available in M. L. West 2003.

[18] See Burkert 2001, 189-97.

[19] *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*, lines 147-64, trans. M. L. West 2003, 83.

And when the singer bids farewell to the Delian maidens, he asks them a favor:

> Think of me in future, if ever some long-suffering stranger comes here and asks, "O Maidens, which is your favorite singer who visits here, and who do you enjoy the most?" Then you must all answer with one voice (?), "It is a blind man, and he lives in rocky Chios: all of his songs remain supreme afterwards." And we will carry your reputation wherever we go as we roam the well-ordered cities of men, and they will believe it, because it is true. And myself, I shall not cease from hymning the far-shooter Apollo of the silver bow, whom lovely-haired Leto bore.[20]

While the reference of the singer to himself as being blind, as having come from Chios, and as wandering through the cities of men, has profoundly shaped ancient and modern images of Homer, there is, of course, no reason whatsoever to suppose that he was Homer himself rather than some anonymous rhapsode who performed Homeric songs a couple of centuries after Homer had composed them. But as an image of the mode of transmission of these songs during the Archaic period, this passage is an enormously valuable testimony in its emphasis on spectacle and musicality. We may juxtapose this vivid picture with another testimony, this one from the fourth century: Plato's dialogue *Ion*. Here Socrates interrogates the vain and rather foolish rhapsode Ion about whether it is on the basis of any kind of technical knowledge that he knows whatever he thinks he knows about Homer's poetry, and concludes that Ion knows very little at all about Homer or about anything else, and that what little he does know, he knows simply as a kind of empirical knack. But along the way, Socrates and Ion provide us a lively account of what successful performances of Homeric poetry at festivals were like: they emphasize the intense emotional effects of the poems upon both the performer and his audience, and the great honors that the rhapsodes who were successful in the competitions were likely to receive.

There may even be some reason to believe that one of these festivals could have played a crucial role in the standardization of an authoritative version of Homer and thus in the definition of what was to count as Homeric poetry in general for the following ages. For it is reported by a few, much later authors that when, in the mid-sixth century BCE, the Athenian tyrant Pisistratus instituted the Panathenaic festival, the most important religious celebration of Athena, the patron goddess of the city of Athens, including both cultural (musical and literary) and athletic competitions, he established the rule that rhapsodes, who had hitherto sung whatever episode they wanted to, were henceforth required to perform the poems of Homer in a single established sequence, corresponding to the sequence of episodes familiar to us as the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*.[21] To what extent these reports may be trusted is very uncertain; since the eighteenth century, scholars have been divided on the question of the very existence, to say nothing of that of the significance, of a so-called Pisistratean recension.[22] But, while it is most unlikely that Pisistratus single-handedly and in one single decision created the Homeric epics in the form that we know them today, it does seem quite plausible to think that it was in the situation of festival performance that audiences gradually came to expect to hear a more standardized form of the epics than would ever have been possible in the atmosphere of lively entertainment and courteous flattery characteristic of a palace context.

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[20] *Ibid*., lines 166-78, trans. M. L. West 2003, 85.

These festivals were doubtless the most significant context for the re-citation of Homeric poetry as a form of extended mass citation during the Archaic and Classical periods. During the same centuries, the Homeric epics were a constant source of stimulation for all the authors writing in the various forms of Greek literature, especially poetry, historiography, and philosophy. By examining, at least briefly, the relations of some of these authors with the Homeric poems, we shall be able better to assess the ways in which citation and pedagogy were interrelated in the preservation of traditional values and, even more, in the creation of new ones.

Despite the loss of so much of the poetry of the archaic Greek poets, it is evident that they were composing within a cultural and linguistic space that had been massively influenced by Homer. This is manifestly the case for those poets who used the same meter as Homer, the dactylic hexameter, to write poems of other sorts – other legendary epics (the poets of the Epic Cycle), didactic poetry of theogonic or more practical contents (Hesiod, Orpheus), poems about historical events (Eumelus of Corinth) – for their language and style are deeply shaped by Homer even when they go new ways in proposing visions of the world more religious, or more down-to-earth, than his own. But so too, poets writing in elegiac verse, both those composing for recitation of narratives, songs, or moral reflections in symposia and festivals, and those writing epigraphs for inscription on tombs and other monuments, found in the Homeric hexameter ready-made formulas that could easily be inserted into their own verses with little or no adaptation – and not only when they were praising the same traditional manly virtues as Homer had in the *Iliad* (so Tyrtaeus and Callinus), but even when they were putting those virtues radically into question (so Archilochus and Xenophanes). It is sometimes difficult for us to tell in such cases whether the verbal coincidence between a later poem and a Homeric passage means that the later poet is consciously echoing Homer, and wants us to be reminded of that passage even when he is directly contradicting it, or whether it is simply metrical convenience that induces him to repeat a formula that he has heard so often that it has become an indispensable part of his poetic toolkit. In most of the other meters of Greek lyric and iambic verse, Homeric formulae enter with greater difficulties, though usually not with insuperable ones; and yet here too the hallmarks of Homeric style and thought are easy to discern. Stesichorus, for example, wrote very long lyric compositions, some of them divided into several books by the Alexandrian editors, that recounted heroic legends, such as those of Orestes, Heracles, and the family of Oedipus, with a leisurely narrative pace and extensive use of dialogue that reminded many ancient readers of Homeric epic.[23] And Pindar, who did not hesitate to criticize Homer sharply, for example, for having exaggerated the valor of Odysseus,[24] sought to honor the patrons for whose athletic victories he composed his surviving poems by linking them as closely as possible with the values, exploits, and genealogies of the world of Homeric legend.

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[21] So e.g. Cicero, *De oratore* 3.137.

[22] For example, Pfeiffer 1968, 6-8 strongly attacks the notion that there was ever a Pisistratean recension of Homer.

The most remarkable evidence for the overwhelming importance of Homer to the poets of the Archaic period is their unmistakable tendency to avoid confronting his poetry directly, but instead to take up other themes and stories, ones that were only marginally related to the

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[23] The Roman rhetorician Quintilian speaks of Stesichorus as “holding up the weight of epic poetry on his lyre” (*epici carminis onera lyra sustinentem*, *Institutio oratoria* 10.1.62). See now Davies and Finglass 2014.

[24] Pindar, *Nemean Ode* 7.20-3.

Iliad and *Odyssey* or not at all connected with them. Homer's stories of Achilles' wrath and of Odysseus' return were evidently so familiar to Greek audiences, and had been recounted by him with such incomparable mastery, that other poets preferred to skirt direct comparison with him and instead sought engagement with the world of heroic legend, if at all, on safer terrain. The Epic Cycle, though it certainly went back to oral legends that co-existed with the Homeric epics, and may even have preceded them, takes great care not to repeat the material in Homer's two epics, but instead narrates the events of the Trojan War preceding and following Achilles' wrath, the returns to home of all the other Greek warriors besides Odysseus, and other epic tales belonging to earlier generations of Greek legend. The Hesiodic *Catalogue of Women* recounts the genealogies of all of the Greek heroes born from the unions between male gods and female humans and, although it is directed as a whole towards the birth of Helen and the beginning of the Trojan War, it foresees these events but does not quite reach them. So too with the lyric poets: Stesichorus retells the legendary material of the Epic Cycle and of other epic poems but steers clear of any of the stories that Homer touched; Sappho, who proposes very different emotional values instead of Homer's heroic ones, tells the story of Hector and Andromache, but limits herself to recounting their wedding,[25] which Homer presupposes but does not narrate; Pindar takes his epic stories much more often from the Cycle than from Homer himself. Bacchylides is a rare exception to this tendency: in one poem, he tells of the failed attempt by Hector to burn the Greek ships in order to honor the descendants of Achilles and Ajax, who thwarted him.[26] But as a rule, it was by maintaining a respectful, and perhaps even slightly intimidated, silence that these poets most honored Homer's primacy.

The same rule applies to the Greek poetic genre that represents the most serious and intense confrontation with Homer's legacy: Attic tragedy. For, despite the fact that almost all fifth century tragedies were set in the world of heroic legend, no surviving tragedy from that period ever takes as its subject matter the events recounted by Homer – fittingly, the only extant Greek tragedy that does tell a story from Homer's account of the Trojan War, the *Rhesus*, was almost certainly not written by Euripides, among whose works it is transmitted, but by an anonymous fourth century tragedian[27] (Euripides does give a comic version of an episode from the *Odyssey* in his non-tragic satyr play, *Cyclops*). Instead, Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides focus not on the military glory and masculine prowess of the Homeric epics, but instead upon the more morally precarious and complex issues of all the other stories that Homer himself had presupposed but had preferred to pass over in silence: the exploits and sufferings of other heroes, like Heracles, Theseus, and Oedipus; the savage brutality of the victorious Greeks at the end of the Trojan War and the unimaginable anguish of the defeated Trojans; the vengeance and hatred that destroyed the conquering heroes upon their return to their homes afterwards. Already Homer had reminded his readers of the humanity of the Trojans and of the sufferings of both Greek and Trojan mothers and wives; and yet, in the end, Homer had resolutely concentrated his attention even more upon celebrating the heroic exploits of the Greek male warriors that caused these very sufferings – or, at least, this was how the Attic tragedians reacted to Homer. The tragic poets chose instead to move to the center of their stage the anguished victims, above all women, whose eloquent words and deeds exposed the flimsiness and savagery of the heroic glory that Homer could be thought to have celebrated.

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[25] Sappho, Fragment 44 Voigt.

[26] Bacchylides 13; see Fearn 2007, 87-160.

In prose, the confrontation with Homer was more direct than in poetry, presumably because the differences in verbal medium and in institutional context freed authors to compete with their great predecessor with fewer inhibitions. The historians continue Homer's project of explaining the mechanisms and causes of the success and failure of both individuals and of larger communities, but they update and correct in their prose his own poetic narratives: like him, they focus on war and the world of men, and they alternate episodes of action in battle with scenes of deliberation in council; but they omit the gods (though not the role of such non-human causal factors as oracles and chance) and emphasize far more strongly the role of the city (which in the meantime had become the basic unit of social life). Herodotus begins with a proud Homeric claim for the necessity of memorializing great deeds so that they are not forgotten, but then goes on immediately afterwards to tell the story of the abduction of Helen, on the basis of alleged Persian authorities, in a completely un-Homeric way;[28]

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[27] This play, after long neglect, is currently being much studied. See especially Liapis 2012 and Fries 2014.

[28] Herodotus, *Histories* 1.1-4.

while Thucydides goes to great lengths to demonstrate, on the basis of precise arithmetic calculations, that the Trojan War recounted by Homer in fact involved far fewer men and ships than did the Peloponnesian War recounted by himself, so that the object of his own historical inquiry can be proven to be of greater magnitude and importance than that of Homer's (and, by implication, so that Thucydides himself can be shown to be greater and more important than Homer).[29]

Greek philosophers, like Greek historians, did not hesitate to criticize their disciplinary colleagues for what they could construe as mistakes of all kinds – indeed, their disciplines seem to have invited them to take a special pleasure in doing so with severity, indeed, sometimes with evident animosity – and they seem to have taken particular pleasure in treating Homer as a colleague deserving of particularly vigorous correction and improvement.[30] A tradition of direct attack upon Homer begins with Xenophanes, who harshly censures Homer's representation of the gods' physical form as naïve and that of their actions as impious.[31] With a nasty pun, Heraclitus asserts that Homer (and Archilochus) should not be performed by rhapsodes in the poetic competitions but should instead be beaten (*rhapizesthai*) and thrown out of them; and in another fragment he derides Homer's ignorance by alluding to the story of how he died when he failed to understand a riddle that some fisher-boys posed him.[32] The line of philosophical opponents of Homeric poetry culminates in Plato, who, in his *Republic*, takes up Xenophanes' criticisms of Homeric theology and greatly deepens and broadens them: the problem is no longer merely that Homer's representations of the gods are impious, what is worse is that his representations of humans are immoral and pernicious, and that his appeal to his audiences' emotions turns them into uncontrolled wild beasts.[33]

But beyond these specific criticisms of Homeric poetry, the whole thrust of early Greek philosophy is clearly best understood as the attempt to provide a new and more satisfactory alternative view of the world as a whole than Homer had presented. Instead of focusing nostalgically upon a long-lost world of heroic and divine action, the philosophers direct their readers' attention to the very earliest beginnings and to the permanent material constitution of the physical world that surrounds them, substituting analysis for narrative and material causation for psychological intention. And when the Greek philosophers address ethical issues, they do so by attempting to engage the forces of rationality in the search not for the Homeric goal of renown after death, even at the cost of great sufferings, but rather for a degree of success and happiness in the present life that can be attained only by avoiding sufferings, or else by discounting them, as far as possible.

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[29] Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War* 1.9-11.

[30] On the complex attitudes of the early Greek philosophers towards the epic tradition, see my "The Poetics of Early Greek Philosophy," in Long 1999, 332-62.

[31] Xenophanes, Fragments B10, B11, B12 DK.

[32] Heraclitus, Fragment B56 DK.

[33] Plato, *Republic*, Book 2, 379aff.

In all these regards, philosophy clearly proposes an alternative model for understanding the world to that of Homeric epic. And yet, here too there can be little doubt that the philosophers learned much from Homer and applied many Homeric techniques as means to achieving their own un-Homeric goals. In particular, the philosophers took over such fundamental features of Homer's poetics as his claim to be telling the truth (though now they defined that truth differently from the way he had), his focus upon the most important kinds of content for his subject matter (though theirs was the physical world, not the siege of Troy), his attempt to encompass a vast range of material (though their own encyclopedic ambitions were far greater even than his), his focus upon narrative temporality (though they applied this more to the interactions of material agents than of human ones), and his privileging of microscopic over macroscopic form. And even Homer's specific poetic devices continue to play a significant role in the writings of the early Greek philosophers. Xenophanes, Parmenides, and Empedocles choose to write in the same metrical verse form as Homer does even after the invention of prose as a vehicle for philosophy; Xenophanes is reported to have performed his poems as a rhapsode in the same festivals as Homeric poetry was performed;[34] and epic similes and repetitions of verses, both familiar techniques of Homer's poetry, are used by Empedocles especially, not only to make his philosophy more vivid and understandable but also to create semantic relations of homology between the contents and the form of his discourse.

Thus, even at their most anti-Homeric, the authors who came after Homer followed him not only in the sense of mere temporal sequence but also in that of complex forms of willing and unwilling imitation and emulation. The most fundamental reason for this is that Homer was central to the educational system of ancient Greece from the earliest times until the end of the Byzantine empire. To be sure, while formal educational systems, in the modern sense of schools of various kinds supervised to some degree by state mechanisms and open to many, if not all, children, were envisioned by some radical thinkers during the Classical period, they did not become comparatively well established until the Hellenistic age. But in the looser sense of acculturation of the young in terms of inherited authoritative models of language and behavior, education, of course, was as indispensable a feature of early Greek society as it has been of every other human society. And in this kind of education, Homer was always central. That is why poets, historians, and philosophers could not do without him: for they had been raised on the milk of Homeric poetry and it had become an inalienable element of their intellectual sinews. It is also why Plato concentrated his polemical energies upon Homer when he set out to reform completely the Greek concept of education – and why he could not do so without introducing his own myths at crucial moments into his own dialogues to compensate for the loss of the Homeric ones he wished to suppress.[35] It explains why historical figures as different as Socrates and Alexander the Great could have programmatically chosen Achilles as the character upon whom to model their own aspirations for excellence and renown. And it also provides a cultural context and a kind of dignity to a story told in Xenophon's *Symposium* (3) that might otherwise seem quaint or even slightly ridiculous. At a drinking-party, Callias asks a certain Niceratus, the son of the great Athenian politician and general Nicias, what the specific kind of knowledge is in which he takes the greatest pride. And Niceratus replies that his father had wanted to make him a good man and, precisely for that reason, had compelled him to memorize all of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. What father, one wonders, would do the same today?

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[34] Diogenes Laertius 9.18.

Homer's centrality to education in the ancient Greek world is documented, for example, by the many school papyri from Hellenistic Egypt that show young students learning, often painfully, to read and write Greek by copying his poetry or by writing paraphrases, elaborations, or commentaries on it – there are far more examples deriving from the *Iliad* than from the *Odyssey*, and far more from the very first books and lines of the *Iliad* than from anything else.[36] Indeed, the very existence of the massive ancient scholia to Homer – more massive by far than those to any other ancient author – testifies to the rich tradition of scholastic instruction in and explanation of this poet's works, starting in the Hellenistic period and continuing until the end of antiquity. And further evidence for the universal dissemination of Homeric texts in ancient schools and in public and private libraries is provided by the very large number of surviving papyri containing parts of his poetry – at last count 1,690 papyri, far more than for any other ancient author. Homer's singularity can be well illustrated by contrast with Hesiod, the other great archaic author of hexameter poetry: for although Hesiod too was widely studied and was revered as the co-founder, together with Homer, of ancient Greek culture, in fact he was copied far less often than Homer was – there are only 158 surviving Greek papyri of Hesiod, less than a tenth as many as there are of Homer – and the ancient scholia to his *Theogony* and *Works and Days* are far less extensive and rich than those to the *Iliad* and *Odyssey.* So, it is for good reason that a recent study of the reception of Hesiod in the ancient world was entitled *The Other Poet*, for Hesiod, for all his importance, was never able to dislodge Homer from his position of unique supremacy:[37] Homer is one of the very few poets (together with Euripides) whom the Greeks could refer to simply by speaking of "the poet"; Hesiod was always the other one.

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[35] See my "Plato's Exoteric Myths," in Collobert, Destrée, and Gonzalez 2012, 13-24.

We may conclude with two suggestive anecdotes told by Plutarch about the fifth century BCE Athenian politician Alcibiades. One time, Alcibiades asked a schoolteacher for a copy of the text of Homer, and when the teacher replied that he did not possess one, Alcibiades punched him in the face and left him standing there. Another teacher told Alcibiades that he possessed a copy of the text of Homer that he had corrected himself; whereupon Alcibiades asked him why, if he was capable of correcting Homer himself, he was still teaching schoolchildren rather than adults.[38] The stories are of very doubtful historical reliability, but that does not make them any the less useful for suggesting to us Homer's unique cultural prominence as a figure of education and acculturation.

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[36] See especially Cribiore 1996, 46, 49-52, and 2001.

[37] Koning 2010.

[38] Plutarch, *Alcibiades* 7.1.

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2

Cultural Roles of the *Book of Songs*: Inherited Language, Education, and the Problem of Composition

David SCHABERG

哀哉不能言	Sad it is not to be able to speak well:
匪舌是出	From the tongue poor speech comes forth,
維躬是瘁	But it's the body it harms.
哿矣能言	Fine it is to be able to speak well:
巧言如流	Clever words flow in a stream,
俾躬處休	Letting the body rest at its ease.[1]

From the moment of its earliest representation in writing in late Shang (1556?-1046? BCE) and early Western Zhou (1046?-771 BCE) China, rhymed and otherwise patterned speech has faced two contradictory demands. On the one hand, it must fit the forms that set it apart as extraordinary speech, and whatever it hopes to convey, it must convey in a language informed by various constraints (of sound, of diction, of formula). On the other hand, it must find a way to deliver whatever occasional, historical, or personal message it is that justifies the act of composition. The dilemma is hardly unique to China or to literate expression or even necessarily to patterned speech: it is a problem of genre everywhere, arguably even "speech genres" of the type Bakhtin described.[2] Speaking intelligibly and effectively means speaking through shared forms. Still, in the early Chinese case, the dilemma develops in a remarkable way. Perhaps because the demands on the side of form (in contrast to the Greek comparanda) are relatively unipolar—that is, concentrated in and sustained by one more or less continuous cultural lineage, and a lineage that values faithful transgenerational cultural reproduction (*mimesis*)—the demands on the side of unique expression become a distinctive problem for the tradition, with the result that the canonical dictum of Chinese poetics—the claim that "poetry expresses aims" (*shi yan zhi* 詩言志)—is taken, both necessarily and quite untenably, to mean that the poem is an entirely individual and spontaneous outpouring of the author's deepest personal feelings. Understanding the dichotomy of formal reproduction and personal expression, and understanding, in particular, the path by which Chinese poetics arrived at this impossible claim, requires a review of the ways in which rhymed and patterned speech is represented as having been put to use in early China, both as performed and as cited in prose. Until a remarkable moment of transformation during the Western Han dynasty (206 BCE-9 CE), the story is one of a poetry collection that played a fundamental role in elite education and that was understood to inform not only educated speech and behavior, but even, ideally, character and motivation.

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[1] The poem cited is "Yu wu zheng," number 194 in the Mao recension. For the original Chinese and a literal English translation, see Karlgren 1950a, 139-42.

[2] Alexander Beecroft's take on recitation is well worth reading; see Beecroft 2010, 205-39.

Recitation and the Zhou *Imaginaire*

To be fair, early texts do include representations of rhymed, patterned speech that seems to come forth as a spontaneous emotional response. A familiar example is the conclusion of the tale of Lord Zhuang of Zheng 鄭莊公 (r. 757-701), who, in 722, catches his mother attempting to depose him in favor of his younger brother and swears a vow "not to see her until we reach the Yellow Springs," that is, the underworld. He immediately regrets his vow. A helpful subordinate teaches him that he can fulfill at least the letter of his vow by digging a long tunnel like those used in tomb-building, and by digging it deep enough to reach groundwater. In this tunnel, Lord Zhuang and his mother are joyfully reunited, and their joy is reflected in a moment of apparently spontaneous recitation:

> On entering the tunnel, the lord recited,
>
> Within the great tunnel
> Our joy flows together.

> On exiting the tunnel, Lady Jiang recited,
>
> Outside the great tunnel,
> Our joy spreads abroad.[3]

The lines recited resemble lines from *Shijing* in that they are fundamentally tetrasyllabic and contain the kinds of reduplicative binomes (here translated "flows together" and "spreads abroad") that are found in many celebratory descriptions in the canonical collection. That the lines are not attested elsewhere certainly leaves open the possibility that the lord and his mother are thought to have been improvising, giving free and direct voice to their feelings. Still, the perfect parallelism of the two recitations, not to speak of the parallelism in the framing narrative material, suggests a certain degree of orchestration, whether on the part of the singers or on the part of the narrator.

We will return to the question of spontaneous recitation at the end of this paper. In order to get there, though, we must consider a far more typical scene of recitation, in which the material recited is anything but original.[4] Like the tale of Lord Zhuang and his mother, this account comes from the *Zuo Tradition*, an annalistic history probably composed around 300 BCE and recounting events in the central states of the Yellow River and Yangzi valleys during the years 722-468.[5] It is 526 BCE, and Han Qi, chief minister of Jin, has made an official visit to the state of Zheng, a subordinate ally. As in several other accounts of diplomatic visits among the states, the proceedings end with a round of poetry recitations:[6]

> In summer, in the fourth month, the six ministers of Zheng saw Han Qi off at the outskirts of the city. Han Qi said, "I request that you several noble men recite in turn, so that I may know Zheng's aims (*zhi*)." Zichuo recited "In the Wilds There Are Creepers."[7] Han Qi said, "How excellent this young man is! There is hope for us." Zichan recited the

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[3] Durrant, Li, and Schaberg 2016, 13 (Yin 1.4c).

[4] See Schaberg 2001, 72-80.

[5] For an overview of the complex problems surrounding the dating and composition of the *Zuo Tradition*, see Durrant, Li, and Schaberg 2016, xvii-xcv.

[6] Durrant, Li, and Schaberg 2016, 1537 (Zhao 16.3d).

[7] "Ye you mancao" (Mao 94); Karlgren 1950a, 61. The relevant lines are "From afar we meet together, / Just as we had hoped."

> Zheng "Lambskin Cloak."[8] Han Qi said, "I am not worthy." You Ji recited "Hiking Up His Skirts."[9] Han Qi said, "While I am here, would I dare trouble you to go to others?" You Ji bowed. Han Qi said, "How excellent that you should speak of this! If not for this incident, would we have been able to reach a good end?"[10] Si Yan recited "Wind and Rain."[11] Feng Shi recited "There Is a Woman Sharing the Carriage."[12] Yin Gui recited "Bark."[13]

The state of Jin was at this time the leader of an alliance of northern states and, in this role, the preserver of a Zhou royal order whose power, though real, was exercised mainly through the invocation of symbols and ideals. Regular meetings among the leading officers of the states, with prescribed gift exchanges, religious ceremonies, and feasting, served to reinforce an identity based on shared Zhou ritual norms. In this order the *Songs* functioned as a cultural text *par excellence*, a medium of communication both diachronic and synchronic, known by reciters and audience alike in the scene depicted, and recognizable to later readers by the titles of the songs.

The close of the ceremony reinforces the point of Zhou identity-formation:

> Delighted, Han Qi said, "Zheng comes close to perfection! You several noblemen have entertained me at the command of your ruler. In not departing from the expressed aims (*zhi*) of Zheng in your recitations, all of you showed intimacy and good cheer. You several noblemen are masters for several generations to come. You would be justified in hav-

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[8] "Gaoqiu" (Mao 80); Karlgren 1950a, 54-5. Three couplets praise a traveler. The poem is referred to as "the Zheng 'Lambskin Cloak'" because two other poems bear the same title (*Maoshi* 120 and 146).

[9] "Qian chang" (Mao 87); Karlgren 1950a, 57. The relevant lines are "If he thinks kindly on me, / He will hike up his skirts to wade across the Zhen. / If he does not think of me, / Can it be that there are not others for me?"

[10] The "incident" is a disagreement Han Qi had with his Zheng hosts over his interest in purchasing a jade from a local merchant. Here Han Qi thanks his hosts for having stopped him from overstepping his prerogatives as a visitor.

[11] "Feng yu" (Mao 90); Karlgren 1950a, 59. The relevant lines are "Now that I have seen the noble son, / How could I not be eased?"

[12] "You nü tongche" (Mao 83); Karlgren 1950a, 55-6. The relevant line is "Truly fine and elegant."

[13] "Tuo xi" (Mao 85); Karlgren 1950a, 57. The relevant line is "Sing and I will harmonize."

> ing no fears." Han Qi presented horses to all of them and recited "We Take."[14] Zichan bowed and had his five high ministers bow, saying, "With you, sir, 'calming' disorder, should we presume not to bow in response to your virtuous generosity?"[15]

The Zheng noblemen have achieved an otherwise unattested kind of *tour de force* in selecting for all of their recitations poems that are classed together under the "Zheng airs" in the first great section of the *Book of Songs*, "The Airs of the States"; that grouping together apparently explains Han Qi's statement that they have "not departed from the expressed aims of Zheng." Han Qi himself, however, chooses for his response one of the "Zhou Hymns," that is, a piece from the oldest stratum of the *Songs*, notably archaic in its language and built around the unifying and pacifying effects of the pre-dynastic King Wen's (1152?-1056?) cultural legacy. By reciting this piece, Han Qi assumes for himself and for Jin the role of the Zhou royal house, and by alluding to this piece in his response ("With you, sir, 'calming' disorder..."), Zichan shows that he understands the message.

If we assume that a narrative likely composed at least a century or two after the events depicted nonetheless preserves some truths about recitation ceremonies of this kind, then the scene can tell us much about elite education during the sixth century, and much about hopes and aspirations that persisted in the time of the narrators. First, both the act of recitation and the *Songs* collection itself were understood—at least in the political and ritual exchanges that are the subject of the *Zuo Tradition*—as tools of identity-formation focused on the preservation of Zhou ideals. Second, regional distinctions were both subsumed by and preserved in this Zhou identity, and in such a way that a celebration of Zheng identity could also express a willing subordination to the Zhou's proxy-ruler, the state of Jin. Whatever linguistic differences there may have been among the various regions and states of the day, recitation scenes never foreground them, instead presenting most exchanges as seamless acts of specialized communication.[16]

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[14] "Wo jiang" (Mao 272); Karlgren 1950a, 241. The poem describes the tireless work of the man who brings peace to the world and protects small domains.

[15] Durrant, Li, and Schaberg 2016, 1539.

[16] *Analects* 7.18 notes that Confucius used "elegant speech" (*yayan* 雅言)—possibly the pronunciation associated with the site of the old Western Zhou

Finally, recitation apparently has something to do with the expression of "aims," "intents," or "ambitions," all possible translations of *zhi* 志, otherwise "goal, purpose, will, wish" (with derived meanings "spirit, mind, record, treatise").[17] As he requests the recitations, Han Qi makes it clear that he wants to "know Zheng's aims," and as he praises the reciters he notes that they have "not departed from Zheng's expressed aims." The single word *zhi*, then, denotes both the aims that the current generation of Zheng ministers hold hidden in their hearts—the aims that are the object of Han Qi's curiosity—and the set of known, recitable Zheng songs, now part of our *Book of Songs*, that the same ministers select from in responding to Han Qi's request. The contradiction, if it is one, is a version of the contradiction of genre: description and prescription seem to merge, and what Han Qi hopes to discern in the reciters' hearts turns out to be already available for their use in their local section of the canon of songs. Without yet trying to resolve the contradiction, we may say, nonetheless, that what was expected from a noble education in the *Book of Songs* was an ability to express individual ambitions through the language of the songs.

Other texts of the middle first millennium BCE corroborate, though only rather thinly, the sense that training in the *Songs* was a crucial element in elite education. Of a man nominated to serve as commander-in-chief of the Jin armies in 633 BCE, an observer notes:

> Xi Hu is the right person. I have often heard his words. He takes pleasure in ritual propriety and music and is well versed in the *Songs* and the *Documents*. The *Songs* and the *Documents* are repositories of dutifulness; ritual and music provide the norms of virtue; and virtue and dutifulness are the foundations of profit. The *Xia Documents* says, 'In their speech hear their claims and appoint them; by their deeds test them openly; with chariots and regalia reward them.'[18]

The emphasis is once again on the way that training in the *Songs* (and in the *Documents*, a collection that includes speeches attributed to very

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capital—in pronouncing the *Songs*, the *Book of Documents*, and ritual statements. A ritual *koine* of this kind would have resisted historical change and allowed certain kinds of communication among representatives of different states. The rare figures who fail to understand poems recited for them come in for withering criticism.

[17] Schuessler 2007, 613.

[18] Durrant, Li, and Schaberg 2016, 403 (Xi 27.4b).

early rulers) prepares the student for successful speech. The *Songs* are mentioned alongside historical chronicles, royal genealogies, ritual propriety, music, statutes, aphorisms, and other canonical records in a long passage on the proper training of a prince: "Teach him the *Songs*, leading him to breadth of knowledge and showing forth virtue, so as to make his aims (*zhi*) dazzlingly clear."[19] Here again, the *Songs* have something to do with their user's aims, and even with the education of those aims, though the text leaves the precise nature of this formation uncertain: is it that exposure to the *Songs* makes the student's own aims clear to him, or is it instead that the *Songs* allow him to make clear his aims for others?

The *Analects*, a text that appears not to have circulated widely until around 150 BCE but that certainly preserves much earlier material, including some sayings that may have been uttered by Confucius himself (551-479 BCE), suggests that for the transmitters of these sayings the *Songs* were understood to have a role both in the moral, or inner, education of the young man and in his preparation for political activity.[20] "Young men! Why is it that none of you study the *Songs*? With the *Songs* one may observe affairs, one may bring together groups, and one may express one's complaints. With them one serves one's father at home, and beyond that one serves one's ruler. And from them one gets to know the names of birds and beasts and plants and trees" (17.9). In two statements to his son—whom he is said not to have taught personally, apparently on principle—he emphasizes the fundamental importance of learning the *Songs*: "A man who hadn't studied the 'Zhou southern airs' (*Zhounan*) and the 'Shao southern airs' (*Shaonan*)"—the first two sections of the "Airs of the States" (*Guofeng*)—"wouldn't he be like someone standing with his face to the wall?" (17.10). The force of the analogy is hinted at in a second lesson Confucius is said to have taught his son: "If you do not study the *Songs*, you'll have nothing to draw on as you speak" (16.13). The man standing with his face to a wall is mute or inarticulate. The full implications of this speechlessness become clear in another passage: "Suppose a man can recite all three hundred *Songs*, but when you entrust him with some administrative duty he cannot carry it out, and when you send him as an envoy to other states he cannot respond to his counterparts on his own initiative. What does it matter then that he can recite so many?" (13.5). The occasion during which one hopes most fervently not to be like a man standing with his face to the wall—that is, the moment when competence in *Songs* recitation matters most and incompetence may be disastrous—is the interstate diplomatic visit. The emphasis is once again on *Songs*-learning as preparation for speech, and specifically for the sort of speech we saw in the Zheng recitation episode. The *Analects* is silent on the relationship between *Songs* and aims (*zhi*), but seems to emphasize the cultivation of aims as a central goal of education.[21]

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[19] Xu Yuangao 2002, 485 (17.1 Chu yu, shang).

[20] On the dating of the *Analects*, see Hunter, 2017.

Citation and Cultured Composition

Far more common than scenes of *Songs* recitation in early texts are instances of citation, in which speakers or writers adduce a line, a couplet, a stanza, or a whole poem in support of an argument, sometimes using the verse material just to cap an exposition, sometimes building an entire speech around extended quotation and exegesis. As represented in the *Zuo Tradition* and other collections of historical narratives, the practice corroborates the sense that members of the educated elite were expected to know the *Songs* well and to be able to display this knowledge in an eloquence thoroughly informed by *Songs*-learning. The ideal implied by instances of quotation, taken all together, is one of deep continuity between learning in the stable canon of the *Songs*, on the one hand, and the changing, occasional, pragmatic goals of prose speech, on the other. One name for the ability to speak in accord with, and in the inherited language of, an idealized Zhou culture, is *wen* 文, which we might fairly call "patterned *paideia*."

To illustrate the practice first with an extreme example of prose informed by quotation, we might consider the following passage, in which a father is assured (perhaps cynically or obsequiously) that he is right to appoint his son to office, and that there is a precedent for the move in appointments made by King Wen himself, who, as the passage stresses, is valuable for the way he exemplified the *wen* for which he was named:[22]

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[21] Among many passages that could be cited as evidence, *Analects* 4.4 is telling: "Just so long as one makes humaneness one's aim, one will be without moral failure." See the excellent treatment in Van Zoeren 1991, 52-79.

> In former times, when King Wu conquered the Shang, taking broad possession of all-under-heaven, fifteen of his brothers governed domains, and forty who had the Ji clan name governed domains. In all these cases kinsmen had been appointed. The right way of making appointments consists in nothing other than appointing the good, whether they are kin or not. As it says in *Songs*:
>
> > There was King Wen:
> > The god on high gave him discernment in his heart. [a_1]
> > Concordant was the news of his virtue, [b_1]
> > And his virtue could shine. [c_1]
> > He could shine; he could be good; [d_1]
> > He could lead; he could rule. [e_1][f_1]
> > He reigned over these great domains,
> > And could bring compliance and unity. [g_1]
> > The domains joined with King Wen, [h_1][i_1]
> > Whose virtue none regretted. [j_1]
> > Having received the blessings of the god on high, [k_1]
> > He extended these blessings to his sons and grandsons. [l_1][23]
>
> [a_2] When the heart can take its ordering principles from dutifulness, that is discernment. [b_2] When virtue is correct and the response harmonious, that is concordance. [c_2] Overseeing and shining upon all in the four directions is shining. [d_2] Giving assiduously without concern for oneself is being good. [e_2] Teaching tirelessly is being a leader. [f_2] Using rewards, celebrations, punishments, and awe, one is a ruler. [g_2] When through kindness and gentle harmoniousness one brings general submission, that is compliance. [h_2] When one chooses the good and follows it, that brings unity. [i_2] Establishing the warp and woof of heaven and earth is cultural patterning.
> [a_2-i_2] Never erring in these nine virtues, [j_2] one acts without bringing regrets. [k_2] In this way one wins Heaven's rewards, [l_2] upon which one's sons and grandsons can rely. Your appointments come close to this virtue of cultural patterning and will have far-reaching effects.

The passage is one I have analyzed elsewhere; the marks in brackets are added to show how the quoted song structures the speech.[24] Here the lines of the cited *Song*—one of the "Greater Elegantiae" (*Daya*), a set of songs closely associated with the heyday of Western Zhou rule—yield a list of twelve generalizations about moral success, elaborated in a structure of parallel sentences that one might call a "rhetoric of good order" or, to use the appropriate Chinese term, *wen*. What is foregrounded in speeches of this kind and, I would argue, to some extent, in almost every citation of the *Songs* or another inherited text, is a continuity across generic modes, a continuity that ties here-and-now instances of eloquent speaking to the avowed ancient sources of common Zhou cultural identity. Proper rhetorical work becomes one element in cult itself.[25]

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[22] Durrant, Li, and Schaberg 2016, 1689-91 (Zhao 28.3b).

[23] "Great" (Mao 241 "Huang yi"); Karlgren 1950a, 193-6.

[24] Schaberg 2001, 76-7.

Most examples of *Songs* citation in speeches do not achieve this level of integration. Nonetheless, they gesture at continuity, sometimes convincingly, sometimes vainly. A few *Songs* lines adduced at the end of a speech may neatly draw together the themes the speaker has addressed and allow him to align his words with ancient Zhou royal values. The citation may be entirely appropriate, as it is when the Jin minister Shuxiang praises a music master who has offered a gentle but pointed criticism of his ruler's extravagant construction projects. Shuxiang says, "What a noble man Music Master Kuang was in his speech! The words of the noble man are true and they reflect the evidence. Thus enmity stays far from his person. The words of the petty man are presumptuous and they lack proof, so resentment and blame follow after him," and then cites the six *Songs* lines on speech that I have chosen as an epigraph for this paper.[26] Or the citation may involve a clever stretch, a variety of the same game of allusion and reference that seems to have animated the recitation scenes. Concluding a criticism of Jin, which, as one of the most powerful states of its time, has done too little to protect and support the tiny vestigial remnant of the Zhou royal house, a Zheng observer cites the following couplet: "That the bottle is empty/ Is a disgrace to the vat alone."[27] That free recoding of the meanings of *Songs* passages cited in speech was accepted, perhaps even praised, is implied in the *Zuo Tradition* narrative that gives the practice its later name: "breaking off a stanza and choosing one's interpretation" (*duanzhang quyi* 斷章取義).[28] To judge from the portrayal offered in the *Zuo Tradition* and similar texts, members of the Spring and Autumn period educated elite prided themselves on their readiness to find the relevance of the *Songs*, and therefore of Zhou royal culture, everywhere in political and personal life, and on their ability to weave the *Songs* into their communications with one another.

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[25] A truly remarkable speech, in which the possibilities of symmetry, repetition, and structural elaboration are explored to the fullest, is analyzed in Schaberg 2001, 34-40, with a schematic representation of the structure on pages 336-7.

[26] Durrant, Li, and Schaberg 2016, 1437 (Zhao 8.1).

[27] Durrant, Li, and Schaberg 2016, 1629 (Zhao 24.6). The *Song* cited is "Long the E Plant" (Mao 202 "Lu'e"; Karlgren 1950a, 153-4), where the

We have no access to the eloquence of the Zhou except through writing, but it is clear, at least on the level of representation, that the mode of citation that was prized in speech was also prized in writing. For example, when a Jin minister writes a letter to Zichan, chief minister of Zheng, deploring his introduction of a law code cast in bronze and arguing that the use of writing for such a purpose will make the governed people petty and litigious, he cites two *Songs* on King Wen's role as a cultural model.[29] To generalize, there is no appreciable difference between the rhetoric of speeches attributed to Spring and Autumn period characters and the rhetoric of brief written pieces, especially letters, that are occasionally attributed to them. And while the Warring States period produced new rhetorical modes that differed strikingly from the highly structured patterning found in the examples we have examined, it also preserved, in the prose writings of a number of thinkers, a version of the rhetoric of good order.

Some of the finest examples of prose from the Warring States period are to be found in the essays composed by Xunzi or Xun Qing (312?-230). Scholars have seen in his style the influence of the *Zuo Tradition*'s well-wrought speeches, and it seems clear in his diction and his phraseology, as in the values he espouses, that he knew the forms and purposes of the rhetoric of good order. More than any other writer, he uses the paragraph-ending *Songs* quotation as a regular, almost routine, element of his argumentation. Of the seventy or so examples one could cite, the following is typical, though also telling:

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image of bottle and vat is equally out of joint with the surrounding material, but has no overt relevance to the responsibilities of powerful states.

[28] Durrant, Li, and Schaberg 2016, 1219 (Xiang 28.9a).

[29] Durrant, Li, and Schaberg 2016, 1403-5 (Zhao 6.3).

> The gentleman is magnanimous, but not to the point of being remiss. He is scrupulous, but not to the point of inflicting suffering. He engages in argumentation, but not to the point of causing a quarrel. He is critical, but not to the point of provoking others. When he upholds an upright position, he is not merely interested in victory. When hard and strong, he is not haughty. When flexible and tractable, he does not merely drift with the demands of the occasion. He is respectful, reverent, attentive, and cautious, but still remains inwardly at ease. Truly this may be called the "perfection of good form (*wen*)." A *Song* says:
>
> > Mildly gentle and respectful men,
> > only they are the foundation for inner power.
>
> This expresses my meaning.[30]

Like a large number of *Songs* citations in speeches, this one comes at the end of a unit of discourse and connects plausibly, though not exhaustively, with what precedes it. It adopts a version of the formula (here translated "this expresses my meaning") by which speakers in the *Zuo Tradition* tie their quotations to their arguments. Although few other examples of *Songs* citation in the *Xunzi* focus so conveniently on patterned *paideia*, or "the perfection of good form" (*wen*), I would argue that the implicit point of citation—that is, the claimed continuity with Zhou values through a Zhou cultural text—is very much in play in all of *Xunzi*'s citations. The passage's focus on the gentleman picks up one of the obsessions of Spring and Autumn period speakers. Finally, the parallelistic and balanced mode of the description (A but not B, C but not D…) echoes a rhetorical mode elsewhere used in celebrations of canonical texts, including the *Book of Songs* itself.[31] It is as if the character of the gentleman is informed by exactly the comprehensive and balanced qualities that the Zhou canon exemplifies. No doubt the practice of citing the *Songs* in speaking and in writing was idealized as a means of creating the gentleman of this kind.

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[30] *Xunzi* 3, "Bu gou": 42. The translation is that of Knoblock 1988, 175. The song quoted is "Splendid are the Flowers" (Mao 214 "Shangshang zhe hua"). I have substituted "song" for Knoblock's "ode" in the final lines.

[31] In *Analects* 3.20, the first piece in the *Songs* is described as "full of pleasure but not to the point of licentiousness, full of sorrow but not to the point of self-harm." The *Spring and Autumn Annals*, the laconic chronicle around which the *Zuo Tradition* is arranged as a sort of year-by-year extended commentary, is described in parallelistic and balanced terms in two places (Durrant, Li, and Schaberg 2016, 815 [Cheng 14.4], 1717 [Zhao 31.5]).

There is good reason to believe that in the pedagogical methods of certain teachers, especially those who upheld a strong tie with old Zhou texts and values, the old facility with *Songs* references in oral recitation and conversation was still prized. Difficult as individual passages in the *Analects* are to date, the following likely reflects something of the teaching practices of Confucius or his successors:

> Zigong said, "What do you pronounce concerning the poor man who yet does not flatter, and the rich man who is not proud?" The Master replied, "They will do; but they are not equal to him, who, though poor, is yet cheerful, and to him, who, though rich, loves the rules of propriety." Zigong replied, "It is said in the *Book of Songs*, 'As you cut and then file, as you carve and then polish.' The meaning is the same, I apprehend, as that which you have just expressed." The Master said, "With one like Ci [i.e., Zigong], I can begin to talk about the *Songs*. I told him one point, and he knew its proper sequence."[32]

It helps to know that of all of Confucius's disciples, Zigong is the one most famous for his eloquence and for the political successes and wealth that his eloquence brought him. Here we encounter him as the Master's star student, singularly capable of connecting the moral lesson he is being taught with a plausible figural expression in the *Songs*.

In the *Mencius*, too, a text that collects accounts of the teachings of Meng Ke (372?-289?), a thinker who affiliates himself explicitly with Confucius and the Zhou tradition, *Songs* quotations figure both in the thinker's teaching and in his efforts to convert various rulers to his philosophy of governance. Typical of his teaching are scenes in which the disciple Gongsun Chou seems to test Mencius on the very possibility of continuity between the canonical text and present political practice, that is, on the possibility of *wen* itself:

> Gongsun Chou said, "It is said, in the *Book of Songs*, 'He will not eat the bread of idleness!' How is it that we see superior men eating without laboring?" Mencius replied, "When a superior man resides in a country, if its sovereign employs his counsels, he comes to tranquility,

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[32] *Analects* 1.15. The translation is from Legge 1991, with slight modifications. The *Songs* lines cited are from "Cove of the Qi" (Mao 55 "Qi yu"); Karlgren 1950a, 36-7.

> wealth and glory. If the young in it follow his instructions, they become filial, obedient to their elders, true-hearted, and faithful. What greater example can there be than this of not eating the bread of idleness?"[33]

Gongsun Chou's question reflects debates of the time, which had raised the question of whether it was right that a ruling class, presumably including the whole educated elite, should be supported on tax revenue.[34] Mencius, therefore, details the sort of benefits that his counsel and instruction could bring to a state, and in this way re-establishes the value of the *Songs* line and justifies the existence of political hierarchy and transference of wealth.

Both in prose composition and in face-to-face pedagogy, then, the *Book of Songs* continued to be a touchstone of value through the Warring States period, and continued to be cited in contexts that aimed to make real the continuity between old Zhou ideals and new circumstances. But we have noted how in the *Zuo Tradition* and in the practice of "breaking off stanzas" there was an element of playfulness, with speakers seeming at times to revel in an ability to exchange contrived or improbable pairings of citation and context. Beyond the *Xunzi*, in texts that likely originate in the third and second centuries BCE, the habit takes a strange turn, and one that indirectly illustrates some of the basic expectations of one sort of citation.

In some cases, the relevance of the citation to the context is so limited, or so embedded in *Songs* interpretations that are no longer accessible to us, that the author of a passage seems to have chosen the lines more or less at random, advancing only an empty claim of continuity. The *Record of Rites* contains some examples like the following:

> The Master said, "If (the ruler) ascribes what is good to others, and what is wrong to himself, the people will not contend (among themselves). If he ascribes what is good to others, and what is wrong to himself, dissatisfactions will more and more disappear. It is said in the *Book of Songs*,

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[33] *Mencius* 7A.32. The translation is from Legge 1991, with slight modifications. The *Song* cited is "Hewing the Sandal Trees" (Mao 112 "Fa tan").

[34] See *Mencius* 3A.4.

> You had consulted the tortoise-shell; you had consulted the stalks;
> In their responses there was nothing unfavorable."[35]

The original *Songs* context of the quoted lines offers us no help at all in discerning a connection with the prose statement that here precedes them. At the very least, our ability to see a connection is being tested, and it is possible that citing has here become nothing more than a conventional move: one cites the *Songs* because they are bound to be relevant, and the specific content of the citation may sometimes matter little or not at all.

Charges of such perfunctory or conventional citation are often brought against the passages collected in another text, the *Outer Traditions of the Han School of Songs Interpretation* (*Hanshi waizhuan*). This text in ten books, probably compiled around 150 BCE, brings together a few hundred brief passages, some of them anecdotes, some of them paragraphs of argumentation, and caps most of them with a quotation from the *Book of Songs*. The passages are presented in the order in which their quoted passages appear in the *Songs*, so that the whole work reads like a peculiar sort of commentary on, or prose elaboration of, the canon. Coverage is uneven: a single couplet may be used to cap three or more successive entries, while many poems receive no treatment at all.

Whether a quotation is successful or not, evidence from the *Outer Traditions* suggests that the practice we have seen both in face-to-face teaching and in prose composition lasted into the Han and even acquired greater importance. Many passages in the text look like exercises in the stitching together of language inherited from multiple sources. Prose composition itself has become a medium of cultural reconciliation and extension. In some cases, the *Songs* citation is matched with a saying attributed to Confucius, or one of his students:

> Confucius said, "There are three sources of anxiety for the gentleman. Not knowing of it: is that not a source of anxiety? Knowing of it but not studying it: is that not a source of anxiety? Studying it but not putting it into practice: is that not a source of anxiety?" As the *Book of Songs* says,

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[35] Liji 30, "Fang ji." The translation is that of Legge 1991 with modifications. The *Song* cited is "Lad" (Mao 58 "Mang").

> Before I have caught sight of the gentleman,
> My anxious heart is frantic.[36]

The anxious tricolon of Confucius's saying—knowing of something (e.g., the Way), studying it, and putting it into practice—is attested in other texts.[37] Only here, though, is it paired with the lines from the *Songs*, and apparently on the basis of the word *you* 憂, "anxious." Some passages are more ambitious still in their knitting together of old threads:

> Confucius said, "If their mouths want flavors and their minds want ease, teach them humaneness. If their hearts want peace and their bodies hate exertion, teach them reverence. If they love disputation but are fearful, teach them courage. And if their eyes love beauty and their ears love fine sounds, teach them dutifulness." The *Changes* says, "He keeps his loins at rest, he separates his ribs from his lower body, and the peril warms his heart."[38] The *Book of Songs* says,
>
> Ah, young woman,
> Do not indulge yourself with that gentleman![39]

Here, in a paragraph, we find a tidy parcel of inherited language on curbing desire. None of the sayings is so familiar as to be trite, and each of them invites further explanation. Such a paragraph might attest to the synthetic abilities of its author, or might equally well furnish a certain kind of teacher or counselor apt touchstones for his arguments. Are we seeing here the successful efforts of a student, or the model given by a teacher? Is this the test paper or the textbook, or both?

What it does with Confucius' sayings and other passages of "Teachings" (*zhuan* 傳, also "transmissions" and "traditions"), the *Outer Tradition* also does with narrative, as if to show how such a technique can extend the *Songs*' truths across history itself.[40] Many of the entries in the *Outer Tradition* are anecdotes: narratives of a few score or a few hundred characters, brief self-contained tales of a kind used frequently by orators and essayists, especially during the Warring States period, but also the basis of historical narrative in such texts as the *Zuo Tradition.* In Warring States texts, these narratives rarely touch on matters of real historical importance. Instead, they use a historical moment and some historical characters, more or less familiar as the case may be, to put in motion whatever verbal display is going to take place: a persuasion, a criticism, a warning, a joke, maybe with an apt quotation or two. Often these anecdotes themselves are carrying out some work of cultural composition but, in their turn, they are paired, in *Outer Tradition*, with a *Songs* citation that is meant to illuminate them, and that draws new authority from this pairing.

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[36] Qu Shouyuan 1996, 60. The *Songs* lines are from "Grass Insects" (Mao 14 "Cao chong").

[37] See Qu Shouyuan 1996, 60, for citations.

[38] For these highly opaque lines from the earliest stratum of the *Book of Changes*, I adapt the translation of Legge 1991.

[39] Qu Shouyuan 1996, 135. The *Song* cited is "Lad" (Mao 58 "Mang"). I follow Qu Shouyuan's suggestion that *bing* 兵 in the second sentence be emended to *an* 安, "peace."

Jieyu, the madman recluse of Chu, is familiar to many readers from his appearance in *Analects* 18.5, where he sings a prophetic song to Confucius and then flees when Confucius tries to speak with him. In *Outer Tradition*, we learn a little more about him:

> Jieyu, the madman of Chu, lived by farming. Once when his wife had gone to market and had not yet returned, the King of Chu sent a messenger with a gift of one hundred measures of gold, and this man came to Jieyu's door and said, "The great king has sent me with one hundred measures of gold for you. He asks you, sir, to govern the Henan region." Jieyu smiled but did not respond, and the messenger went away, finding nothing he could say to Jieyu.
>
> When Jieyu's wife came back from the market, she said, "You were a young man, sir, when you began to work at being dutiful. Are you going to give it all up now that you're old? Why is it that the wheel ruts outside the gate are so very deep?" Jieyu said, "Today the king sent a messenger with a gift of one hundred measures of gold. He wants to have me govern the Henan region." His wife said, "You didn't say yes, did you?" "No." His wife said, "To refuse a ruler's appointment would not be loyal of you. But accepting it would amount to giving up being dutiful. It would be better to leave him." So off they went, husband

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[40] In Schaberg 2001, 86-95, I examine an effort to read the *Book of Songs* as a singular historical text, one whose songs link their audience to distinct periods in the past, and especially to the moral qualities of those ages, through the medium of music. Perhaps the *Outer Tradition*'s historical readings are one local version of this effort to makes the *Songs* a key to history.

> carrying their cooking pots and urns, wife shouldering the classical texts and the ritual implements, and they changed their names, and no one knew where they went. The *Analects* says, "Faced with a displeased look, he would rise immediately, soaring high and only then coming to rest."[41] That is Jieyu's wife. The *Book of Songs* says,
>
> I am going to leave you,
> And go to that happy land.
> That happy land, that happy land—
> There I'll find my place.[42]

It does not matter to the authors and compilers of the *Outer Tradition* that Jieyu's move, the recluse's refusal of political appointment, makes for a story more typical of the *Zhuangzi*, a text in which the most admirable figures shun the pollution that comes with service, than of the *Analects* or *Mencius* or *Xunzi*, texts that praise virtuous office-holding. In truth, the text might be said to co-opt a *Zhuangzi*-style anecdote by rewriting its reasoning. Instead of a recluse who regards office-holding itself as pollution, we have a man of principle (*yi* 義, "duty"), a fastidious man, for whom office-holding itself is not wrong, but no existing government is acceptable. "Duty" is not a word that the *Zhuangzi*'s recluses would own. The *Songs* quotation also helps determine the reading of the anecdote. The poem cited is a complaint directed at an exploitative master or landlord, who is figured as a "great rat" eating the singers' grain. Now Jieyu, such a surprising and alien figure in the context of the *Analects*, looks remarkably familiar, rather like a scholar of the classics and cultivator of tradition. And he has the family his virtue deserves. By such measures, the teachers and students of the *Book of Songs* domesticated teachings and historical moments their predecessors might not have been able to count as their own.

Where recitation involved a celebration of an idealized common Zhou cultural heritage, citation claims to extend that heritage by weaving it into new prose contexts, in one way or another, insisting that the match between classical tag and some other utterance or some event will be illuminating. The practice can be a hollow cliché of a certain kind of prose, or it can become a most thoughtful kind of hermeneutic work, testing the adequacy of past and present to each other.

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[41] *Analects* 10.18.

[42] Qu Shouyuan 1996, 183. The *Song* cited is "Large Rats" (Mao 113 "Shi shu"); Karlgren 1950a, 73-4.

Composition and the Poetics of the "Great Preface"

The key early Chinese document on literary activity and its cultural implications is the "Great Preface" to the *Book of Songs*. Transmitted with the Mao school's recension of the *Book of Songs*, which had its roots in the pre-Han period and had risen to preeminence over other schools by the end of the Western Han (206 BCE-9 CE), the "Great Preface" gives an overview of the main genres found in the *Book of Songs*, and advances a theory of poetry both as the spontaneous expression of feeling and as a tool of moral indoctrination and political critique. It returns to the crucial term *zhi*, which already in the *Zuo Tradition* appeared to mean both the "intent" of the individual reciter in choosing a song and the "normative aims" inscribed in songs:

> The *shi* (poem) is that to which the *zhi* (intent) goes. When it is in the heart it is *zhi*, when uttered as speech it is *shi*. An emotion stirs within and takes form in speech; when speaking is not enough, one sighs about it; when sighing about it is not enough, one sings long about it; and when singing long about it is not enough, one unknowingly gestures about it with one's hands and dances it with one's feet. The emotion issues forth as sound, and when sound forms patterns it is called tone.[43]

The passage recalls another in the "Canons of Yao" chapter of the *Book of Documents*, in which a legendary early sage ruler makes an official appointment:

> Kui, I charge you to be Director of Music, to teach the descendant sons, (to be) straight and yet mild, large-minded and yet careful, firm and yet not tyrannical, great and yet not arrogant. Poetry expresses the mind (*shi yan zhi*), the song is a chanting of its words, the notes depend upon the chanting; the pitch-pipes harmonize the notes. When the eight sounds can be harmonized and not encroach upon each other, Spirits and men will be brought into harmony.[44]

This passage's formulation—"poems bespeak aims"—would become for later critics and philosophers the fundamental expression of the relationship between emotional impulse and literary creation.

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[43] *Shisan jing zhushu fu jiaokan*, 1.1.13.

[44] I have slightly modified the translation of Karlgren 1950b, 7.

The *Documents* passage situates poem, singing, and aims within an institution designed to maintain harmonious relations between spirits and humans. It does not mention emotion or spontaneity. By contrast, the "Great Preface" passage does lend itself to a reading in which spontaneous expression is the *raison d'être* for poetic composition. This reading, now entirely customary, poses a historical problem: when the contents of the "Great Preface" were being written, perhaps during the late Warring States period (ca. 475-221 BCE) or early Han, new poems of the kind known as *shi* were not being composed and had not been composed for perhaps as long as four centuries.[45] For readers of the time, then, the "Great Preface" might be referring in this passage to the way pieces in the *Book of Songs* had been composed, but certainly not to the way their contemporaries' emotions might burst forth in new poems.

It was in the early Western Han, in the compositions of Wei Meng (?-?), that *shi* began to resume its status as a compositional genre, and during the next centuries increasing numbers of poets practiced it, so that it would ultimately become pre-modern China's most enduring and prestigious poetic form. But one must wonder what the authors of the "Great Preface" passage, who must have written long before Wei Meng's time, thought about the relationship between their depiction of spontaneous expression of aims (*zhi*) and the very different account of *zhi* given in the *Zuo Tradition*, where the ministers of Zheng choose their recitations from within the "expressed aims" of their state, that is, from among the *Songs* associated with that state. Perhaps they idealized an ecstatic form of composition that was exemplified in the *Songs* but had disappeared by their own time. But it is possible too that later readers misunderstood the extent and nature of the spontaneity the "Great Preface" depicts. The evolution of emotion into speech, song, gesturing, and finally dancing implies an irresistible force of emotion, but the crucial opening of the lines does not necessarily imply the creation of new *shi*: "The *shi* (poem) is that to which the *zhi* (intent) goes. When it is in the heart it is *zhi*, when uttered as speech it is *shi*." Nothing in this formulation makes it impossible that the *shi* in question are learned songs like the Zheng ministers were able to sing. The awkward "that to which the *zhi* goes" does not—in classical Chinese any more than in English—seem to depict the way an intention turns into a new poetic composition. On the contrary, it aptly captures the way a thinker's unspoken ideas and intentions might be drawn to existing language already long in customary use for the expression of aims in recitation. The "Great Preface" passage is most likely idealizing the *Songs* as a treasury of perfect expression for human joys, sorrows, and appeals for justice and order.

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[45] A possible exception is to be found in *Xunzi* 26, "Fu": 480.

In this way, then, the "Great Preface," with its sparse and ambiguous treatment of the poem and the intent, works as a kind of hinge between two eras, which we might designate classical and early medieval. On the one hand, it looks backward to the *Zuo Tradition* scenes of recitation and to a world in which recitation, or the citation of *Songs* lines in speech or in writing, reaffirmed visions of Zhou cultural and political unity in the legacy of King Wen. This was the world enshrined in the dominant traditions of pedagogy from the Warring States period on, traditions that came to be associated with Confucius and that were regular parts of training for office-holders throughout imperial Chinese history. On the other hand, the passage opens up the possibility that new writers could write new *shi* poems from new impulses, and that these impulses and these poems could come into being just as the *Songs* did long before, and perhaps with the same moral exemplarity that the *Songs* themselves had. Here traditions of prose composition, with their assertion of continuity of Zhou values in new texts, may again have furnished inspiration. Just as philosophers like Xunzi and the authors of the *Outer Tradition* extended the *Songs*' cultural relevance by building prose around citations, this compositional reading of the "Great Preface" passage—surely one of the most influential misreadings of all times—gave a gift to future poets by making them teachers, and to poetry by making it part of a civilizing project.

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3

CANON, CITATION AND PEDAGOGY: THE HOMERIC EPICS AND THE *BOOK OF POETRY*

ZHANG Longxi

Greece and China in antiquity are seen by many as very different cultures with little in common, and a theoretically interesting way to find connections or comparable elements in both cultures is the idea of the Axial Age proposed by the German philosopher Karl Jaspers in his book *Vom Ursprung und Ziel der Geschichte* (*The Origin and Goal of History*), published after the Second World War in 1949. The basic idea of the Axial Age refers to the fact that many important thinkers and their teachings—Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Confucius, Laozi, Mencius, the Buddha, Isiah, Jeremiah, etc., and the major religious and cultural traditions related to their teachings—all arose during the period between 800 and 200 BCE. For Jaspers, seeking transcendence and what is beyond the immediately present is the universal goal of human history, and the universality is seen in the simultaneous but independent rise of these religious and cultural traditions. Despite the significant differences among the Axial Age cultures and civilizations, Jaspers sees an overarching unity and, using a term reminiscent of Plotinus, he speaks of unity as "the One". "The One is rather the infinitely remote point of reference, which is origin and goal at one and the same time; it is the One of transcendence," says Jaspers. "If universal history as a whole proceeds from the One to the One, it does so in such a way that everything accessible to us lies between these ultimate poles."[1] In these words, we may detect a historical continuity and unity in the concept of the Axial Age.

In recent years, this concept has received some renewed interest and generated much discussion. Robert N. Bellah understands the Axial Age as a time of crucial changes, when important thinkers responded to their respective cultures and societies with strong critiques. Our renewed interest in the Axial Age, Bellah argues, is prompted by similar problems in our own time when "the old dream of progress in popular culture is being replaced by visions of disaster, ecological catastrophe in particular." It is with "a feeling of crisis" that he wants to "inquire whether the Axial heritage can help us or hinder us in our current crisis."[2] Thinkers in the Axial Age were facing what Jürgen Habermas calls "the legitimation crisis," and they "all involved social criticism and harsh judgments on existing social and political conditions."[3] From the Upanishads in late Vedic India to Buddhist monasticism, from the Daoist critique of the world of human interference to the Confucian critique of unethical rulers, and from the Prophets in ancient Israel to Socrates and Plato in ancient Greece, Bellah sees all the important Axial Age thinkers as criticizing the existing regime of power from the outside; he calls them "renouncers," and he recognizes some "utopian projections of a good society that the various kinds of renouncers offered in criticism of the existing order."[4] Powerful social critique and attractive utopian vision thus constitute both spiritual and intellectual resources that we may draw on in our own time, but also a burden of the historical past with destructive potential. "The great utopian visions have motivated some of the noblest achievements of mankind; they have also motivated some of the worst actions of human beings," says Bellah, with a deep sense of ambivalence. "Theory in the sense of disengaged knowing, inquiry for the sake of understanding, with or without moral evaluation, has brought its own kind of astounding achievements, but it has also given humans the power to destroy their environment and themselves."[5] The Axial Age, however, began a heritage that has been extremely important and influential in human culture and history, so it is necessary for us to reflect on its merits and potential dangers, and to draw from its resources and its experiences. Rethinking the Axial Age may provide a legitimizing theoretical background to our effort to examine and compare the great works in ancient Greece and China, the Homeric epics and *Shijing* or the *Book of Poetry*, which are in themselves spiritual and intellectual resources for Axial Age thinkers to draw on for reflection and critique.

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[1] Jaspers 2010, 264-5.

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[2] Bellah 2014, 450.
[3] Ibid., 450, 451.
[4] Ibid., 452.
[5] Ibid., 465.

In his essay, “Homer in Greek Culture from the Archaic to the Hellenistic Period,” Glenn Most first describes in a most vivid manner two Greek busts of Homer, created at different times, centuries apart, and many centuries after the historical time when Homer had supposedly lived. Given the vast time difference, neither of the two busts could have possibly been a true representation of Homer the epic poet, if there was, indeed, a real Homer in ancient time.[6] Like with many other ancient figures and cultural heroes, much of Homer as a person and his personal life remain a mystery; there is so much uncertainty about his birthplace that some witty lines have emerged and become rather famous, lines attributed to several poets with a degree of uncertainty fitting for the mystery of the great Homer himself:

> Seven wealthy towns contend for Homer dead,
> Through which the living Homer begged his bread.

The two busts seem to look very different to us modern viewers, but the ancient Greeks, according to Most, “seem never to have felt the slightest difficulty in recognizing both of them, different though they manifestly are, as Homer” (163). The point is that the image of Homer is not a realistic representation, but a symbolic one, for the bust is, as Most remarks, “an allegory of what Homer meant for the culture of ancient Greece” (166). His blind eyes, the lines on his forehead, his thick hair, his beard and his slightly open mouth, all these physical features are signs with symbolic meanings to be read allegorically, and they give expression to Homer’s insight, knowledge, intelligence, artistic perfection, wisdom, and the other virtues belonging to a great poet. The idea of an author who created their canonical epic poems was important for the Greeks, who "not only presupposed the existence of a specific author who composed them but also that this author could, and indeed must, be conceived of as an individual person imaginable down to the details of his physical appearance," says Most. And he is correct to add that "in this regard, as in others, Chinese culture offers a striking contrast" (167). Indeed, for the Chinese *Book of Poetry*, the concept of author is irrelevant, for we have only one name mentioned in one poem as the maker of the poem, but for more than 300 poems, we do not have any information of authorship.

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[6] In his effort to discover “the true Homer,” the eighteenth-century Italian philosopher Giambattista Vico argues that Homer was not a real person, but “was an idea or a heroic character of Grecian men insofar as they told their history in song” (Vico 1948, section 873, 289). Vico considers Homer as representing the collective identity of the Greek people and their poetic creativity, saying that “the reason why the Greek peoples so vied with each other for the honor of being his fatherland, and why almost all claimed him as citizen, is that the Greek peoples were themselves Homer” (ibid., section 875, 290).

The concept of authorship, however, has less to do with specific cultural traits or the nature of a collective psyche than with the nature of the works under discussion. In ancient Greece, as Most notes, Homer's poetry was for a long time orally performed and transmitted, and it was fluid and underwent changes and modifications to various degrees in each and every performance. From oral to written, as Most clearly shows, there was also a long process in which the works attributed to Homer formed a decreasing curve, "a gradual evolution and restriction." At the beginning of the Archaic Age, Homer was thought to be the author of "all poetic compositions in hexameter verse narrating the exploits of heroes from the legendary past" (169), but by the fourth century BCE, Plato, and particularly Aristotle, separated what we now call the Homeric epics—the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*—from all other old Greek poetry. In his *Poetics*, Aristotle "notes repeatedly that Homer's works have a higher degree of unity of action" than all other epic poems in ancient Greece, says Most. "Thus, by the second half of the fourth century BCE, the Greeks had reduced the number of works assigned to Homer from the whole mass of heroic epic to just two poems" (170). By reducing the number of works attributed to Homer to only the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, Most continues to argue, the Greeks "had made it easier to determine the outlines of a single authorial personality who could be defined not merely by his content (tales of whatever sort about legendary heroic actions) but also by his particular aesthetic taste and tendencies" (170). In other words, a high degree of unity of the works—and in the case of Homer, the narratives about the Trojan war and Odysseus' adventures in his journey home after the war—made it conceivable and indeed desirable to attribute the poems to a single author.

The Chinese *Book of Poetry*, on the other hand, is a collection of 305 short and unrelated poems, in which there is no narrative or thematic unity and, consequently, the idea of an author for the entire collection did not even arise. That does not mean, however, that the concept of authorship was lacking in ancient China, because another important collection of ancient poetry, *Chuci* or *Songs from the South*, was centered on the figure and the life of Qu Yuan (339?–277? BCE), a poet living in the late Axial Age. As the fifth-century critic Liu Xie (465?–522) remarks, in his famous critical work *The Literary Mind or the Carving of Dragons* (*Wenxin diaolong zhu* 文心雕龍注): "Without Qu Yuan, how could we have *Li sao*?"[7] Now, *Li sao* or "Taking Leave of Sorrow" is Qu Yuan's major work in the collection of the *Songs from the South*, the longest lyrical poem in classical Chinese literature; it is also the earliest autobiographical work in ancient China, in which Qu Yuan spoke of his noble lineage, his talents and virtues, and how he was calumniated by his political enemies and alienated from the king and the court. "Taking Leave of Sorrow" is a great poem about loyalty, political intrigue, moral courage and integrity, and the willingness to sacrifice oneself for the sake of one's country, a poem filled with tragic pathos and a strongly personal tone and individual character. Qu Yuan's works left a profound imprint not only on the *Songs from the South*, but on Chinese literature as a whole. So, we may conclude that when there is a sufficient degree of unity in a certain amount of literary works, be it based on themes or action, or on the lived experience of some protagonists, and when enough is known about the origin of certain works, the idea of an author as the creator of the literary work will become necessary and important. This is true of Homer in ancient Greece, even though the true Homer may not be an individual person; and this is also true of Qu Yuan in ancient China during the Warring States period (478–221 BCE). Outside the literary sphere, there are, of course, many other authors in ancient China, such as Confucius, Mencius, Laozi, Zhuangzi, and thinkers of several other schools, who created some of the most important foundational texts in the Chinese cultural tradition during the Axial Age.

In his essay on Homer, Most discusses two important concepts: citation and pedagogy. Citation refers to "the modes of propagation and dissemination of Homer's poetry and thought, above all in terms of verbal quotation but also, more widely, in those of allusion, reminiscence, parody, and all the other modes of overt and covert intertextuality” (171). Pedagogy, on the other hand, refers to the use of the Homeric epics for the transmission of cultural values, “values outside of the world of Homer’s poems,” for the teaching of the young in the Greek society (171). The two concepts are closely related, and both are crucial for the canonization of Homer as the great poet for ancient Greece. As we shall see, citation and pedagogy are also important in considering the Chinese *Book of Poetry*, which David Schaberg discusses in his essay. In Homer’s case, citation went from earlier oral performances in palaces and banquet halls to later recitations at festivals, and it was a process that moved from more fluid and creative modifications towards increasingly fixed, standardized, and canonized written texts, a process of change, as Most puts it, from creative “heroic performers of the legendary age” to “mechanical memorizers and repeaters of more or less authoritative versions of those songs,” from “what had once been a purely fluid oral situation of composition and performance” to “the repeated presentation of a fixed, written, canonized text” (173). Plato’s lively dialogue *Ion* gives a good example of a rhapsode who took pride in memorizing Homer for a festival performance rather than modifying what he recited, and it was perhaps through such public performances as festival recitals, as Most suggests, that “audiences gradually came to expect to hear a more standardized form of the epics than would ever have been possible in the atmosphere of lively entertainment and courteous flattery characteristic of a palace context” (175). The lack of fluidity and creativeness was compensated for by a more polished, and perhaps more refined version of the Homeric epics as canonical texts, from which all later poets and writers could draw for their own purposes, either as exemplary precedents and revered models or as targets of criticism, contention, rivalry, or even rebellion.

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[7] Liu Xie 2006, 1:48. Liu Xie's original phrase reads: *bu you Qu Yuan, qi jian "Li sao"* 不有屈原，豈見離騷?

In ancient Greek poetry, Homer’s position was supreme and unchallengeable. Most observes that almost all Greek poets of the Archaic period avoided repeating materials Homer had already dealt with so excellently in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* so that they did not have to compete directly with him. Even though many poems and almost all fifth-century Greek tragedies took heroic legends as their basic materials, “no surviving tragedy from that period ever takes as its subject matter the events recounted by Homer” (177). It is, indeed, “by maintaining a respectful, and perhaps even slightly intimidated silence that these poets most honored Homer's primacy" (177). By the fourth century BCE, however, the situation started to change when historians, and especially philosophers, began to challenge Homer's authority and criticize him from various positions. Most explains the change as based on both a formal or generic difference, such as prose versus poetry, and also as a disciplinary difference, such as history and philosophy versus poetry, i.e., "differences in verbal medium and in institutional context" (178). Here we see the rise of philosophical discourse in the Axial Age and the so-called quarrel between poetry and philosophy, in which philosophy, best exemplified by Plato, criticized poetry, exemplified by Homer, not only in fierce competition for intellectual authority, but also in more fundamental ways to make a paradigmatic change in thinking and outlook.

Greek philosophers seem particularly prone to agonistic rivalry, says Most, for "their disciplines seem to have invited them to take a special pleasure in doing so [i.e., criticizing] with severity, indeed sometimes with apparent animosity—and they seem to have taken particular pleasure in treating Homer as a colleague deserving of particularly vigorous correction and improvement" (179). Among the pre-Socratic philosophers, Xenophanes already criticized Homer and Hesiod for having "ascribed to the gods all deeds which among men are a reproach and a disgrace: thieving, adultery, and deceiving one another," while he held that "God is one, greatest among gods and men, not at all like mortals in body or thought."[8] Heraclitus sounded even harsher when he said that "Homer deserved to be expelled from the contests and flogged."[9] Plato knew Homer well and quoted the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* many times in his works, but in his envisioned good society, there is no place for a poet like Homer. If such a poet arrives in the city, "bringing with himself the poems which he wished to exhibit," says Plato, in a sarcastic vein, "we should fall down and worship him as a holy and wondrous and delightful creature, but should say to him that there is no man of that kind among us in our city, nor is it lawful for such a man to arise among us, and we should send him away to another city."[10] The banishment of Homer from Plato's ideal republic marks a crucial turning point from the early Archaic to the

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[8] Xenophanes 1996, 26.

[9] Heraclitus 1996, 32.

[10] Plato 1961, *Republic* 3.298a, 642.

Classical period and has a profound impact on the history of Western culture. And yet, there were also philosophers who came to defend Homer by presenting allegorical interpretations to argue that the Homeric epics contain deeper and more profound meanings than the literal sense of the text. The Homeric epics were important for the idea of pedagogy, as Most remarks, "Homer was central to the educational system of ancient Greece from the earliest times until the end of the Byzantine empire. . . It is also why Plato concentrated his polemical energies upon Homer when he set out to reform completely the Greek concept of education" (181). But to fight against tradition is also, and of necessity, to engage in and be influenced by tradition. Ultimately, Homer occupied the supreme position in Greek culture and became the most well-known representative of Greek poetry. Hesiod tried to compete with Homer, but "for all his importance," as Most argues, he "was never able to dislodge Homer from his position of unique supremacy: Homer is the poet whom the Greeks could refer to simply by speaking of 'the poet'; Hesiod was always the other one" (182). The centrality of Homer for education in ancient Greece guaranteed the canonicity of the Homeric epics, and we see here again the importance of the concept of pedagogy in speaking of Homer as canon. The canonicity of classical texts and their use in education make a good point of convergence at which we can now turn to David Schaberg's essay on the *Book of Poetry* or, in his terminology, the *Book of Songs*.

Pedagogy is one of the significant elements in Schaberg's discussion of the *Book of Songs*, which, as he describes it, is "a poetry collection that played a fundamental role in elite education and that was understood to inform not only educated speech and behavior, but even, ideally, character and motivation" (186). Just as in Most's essay on Homer, in Schaberg's essay, the concept of pedagogy is also closely related to citation but, in the case of the Chinese *Book of Songs*, the core idea is not citation as oral performance of a fluid form of poetry, but *re-citation* or quotation from the canonical *Book of Songs* as a more or less fixed, written text. Even though some of the poems, particularly in the *Guofeng* or "Airs of the States" section, show traces of orality in their identical, formulaic phrases, the *Book of Songs* as a whole was already written down in the time of Confucius. In fact, according to a legend often recounted in Chinese history, Confucius himself was credited for its compilation. The first mention of the Confucian classics in ancient Chinese texts is found in the Daoist book of *Zhuangzi*, in which Confucius was described as consulting with the

Daoist philosopher Laozi, saying, "I have been studying the six classics—*Poetry, Documents, Rites, Music, Changes,* and the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, and I think I have done it long enough to become familiar with their substance."[11] In this passage, all the six classics Confucius was studying are obviously written texts, of which *Poetry*, i.e., the *Book of Songs*, came first. Different from the case of the Homeric epics and their stabilization process from the oral to the written form, by the time we have any information about the *Book of Songs* in the highly literate Chinese culture, it already existed in a written form. Therefore, any citation from the *Book of Songs* was already a recitation from a canonical text and, on a typical occasion of such recitations, as Schaberg remarks, "the material recited is anything but original" (187). In other words, the *Book of Songs* came to us as canonized texts, from which one might cite or quote some verses to borrow a certain cultural prestige and authority, but there was no room or possibility for anyone to change the text or make any creative modifications.

As we find in the annalistic history, the *Zuo Tradition*, when ministers and officials met from different states in ancient China, they often quoted lines from the *Book of Songs* to express their intent or aim in an elevated and more elegant language, and more significantly, to borrow the authority of canonical texts and, as Schaberg argues, to establish "a continuity that ties here-and-now instances of eloquent speaking to the avowed ancient sources of common Zhou cultural identity" (194). Schaberg shows that in many "diplomatic visits among the states, the proceedings end with a round of poetry recitations" (187). He describes in some detail the recitations recorded in the *Zuo Tradition* and, on such occasions, a reciter typically only mentioned the titles of particular poems, and everyone participating in the recitation would understand the reciter's intent or point. This certainly testifies to the common knowledge they all shared and the high degree of familiarity they all had with the *Book of Songs*. Lines from this canonical work were often quoted to embellish their speech, and that was one of the main uses of the poems. As Schaberg quotes Confucius as saying to his own son: "If you do not study the *Songs*, you'll have nothing to draw on as you speak" (191). Just like the Homeric epics, the *Book of Songs* provided basic education for the young, and that is an essential aspect of the canonicity of the text.

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[11] Guo Qingfan 1954, 3:234.

It is important to realize that citations of the *Book of Songs*, as recorded in the *Zuo Tradition*, are never readings of complete poems, but quoting a few lines from a poem out of context and trying to integrate them into whatever the reciter wants to express in his present situation. This has internal textual evidence: Lupu Gui 盧蒲癸, a historical character in the *Zuo Tradition* itself, clearly said that "in reciting poems of fragmented verses, I take what I want."[12] This brazen admission, as the erudite modern scholar Qian Zhongshu comments, "reveals a method of rhetoric since the Spring and Autumn period (771–476 BCE)." Such a rhetorical method, he continues to say, is "often perpetrated by the ancients and repeatedly seen in classical writings. All are ancient 'phrases and verses' borrowed to express present 'feelings and things.' This is similar to an author's creative transformation of materials, and quite different from quoting ancient words to support a contemporary argument, which is what a scholar does in search of textual evidence."[13] That is to say, citation or recitation from the *Book of Songs* in ancient China was a practice of using the canonical texts for whatever purposes the reciters had in mind, which might not be, and often were not, what the poems meant in their own contexts. As Schaberg shows, such use of fragmented verses from the *Book of Songs* is not just found in the *Zuo Tradition*, but also in the dialogues between Confucius and his students in the *Analects*, in the conversations between Mencius and his interlocutors, and in quite a number of other ancient texts. The citation of verses from the *Book of Songs* was supposed to illuminate the "here-and-now" situation, but sometimes their correlation becomes so vague, strained, and even obscure, and, as Schaberg notes, "the relevance of the citation to the context is so limited, or so embedded in *Songs* interpretations that are no longer accessible to us, that the author of a passage seems to have chosen the lines more or less at random, advancing only an empty claim of continuity" (198). The correlation between a poem and its commentary in the *Book of Songs* is also often vague, strained, and even obscure. In a book like the *Outer Traditions of the Han School of Songs Interpretation*, as Schaberg says, the practice of citation became nothing more than a "perfunctory or conventional citation" (199). The obscurity of correlations between the *Book*

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[12] Zuo Qiuming 2006, 215. The original is in the section of the 28th year of Duke Xiang, and it reads: "賦詩斷章, 余取所求焉."

[13] Qian Zhongshu 1986, 1:224.

of Songs and the context in which its citation was supposed to do some interpretive or explanatory work may be a major reason why this Han school of *Songs* interpretation did not survive and was eventually lost during the Song dynasty, around the tenth and the eleventh centuries.

Schaberg begins and ends his essay by raising questions about the "Great Preface" to the *Book of Songs*, and challenging its normative reading. The "Great Preface" develops an idea from an earlier text, the *Book of Documents*, namely, "the claim that 'poetry expresses aims' (*shi yan zhi* 詩言志)," and in Chinese criticism, says Schaberg, this "is taken, both necessarily and quite untenably, to mean that the poem is an entirely individual and spontaneous outpouring of the author's deepest personal feelings" (186). Such a normative reading, he argues, though "now entirely customary" (204), is "surely one of the most influential misreadings of all times" (205). For Schaberg, the normative reading of an expressive poetics becomes an "untenable misreading" because in ancient China, as he tries to show in his essay, the educated elites always cited or recited already existing verses from the *Book of Songs* to fit whatever intent or aim they had, but never went out to create their own poems as spontaneous articulations of their feelings. The use of poetry is surely not the same as the original composition of poetry. So the point of contention comes down to these questions: apart from the citation or use of already existing poetic texts, was there a concept of poetry *sui generis* in ancient China, existing in and of itself, distinct from its use? Was there original composition of poetry as an expression of the poet's thoughts and emotions? The answer to both these questions, I would say, is certainly affirmative.

Confucius famously defined the four functions of poetry as *xing* 興 (the affective function of giving rise to high spirits), *guan* 觀 (the cognitive function of revealing social conditions and mores), *qun* 群 (the communal function of reconciling and uniting different social groups), and finally *yuan* 怨 (the cathartic function of giving vent to one's sorrow or grievances).[14] The last function points to an expressive poetics in the sense that poetry is understood as an outlet for one's repressed feelings and ideas, and that has become a major concept in both Chinese poetry and Chinese literary criticism.[15] Mencius did cite verses from the *Book of Songs* in much the same way as those reciters in the *Zuo Tradition*, but that is not the whole picture. When his student Xianqiu Meng asked him about the reading of certain poems from the *Book of Songs*, Mencius famously said that "the interpreter of a poem should not let the words obscure the text or the text obscure the intention. To trace back to the original intention with sympathetic understanding: that is the way to do it."[16] From these words, it is clear that Mencius understood poetry as an expression of the poet's "original intention," which should govern a reader's understanding. He certainly thought the poet held the key to appropriate understanding. "How can it be that while reciting an author's poems and reading his books, we do not know him as a person?" says Mencius. "Thus we must study the age in which he lived, and that is what we mean by making friends with the ancients."[17] James J. Y. Liu calls such a view "Mencian intentionalism."[18] So, there is no doubt that poetry in ancient China was thought to be an outlet for expressing the poet's intent or emotions, and that is what the "Great Preface" to the *Book of Poetry* tries to describe:

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[14] See Liu Baonan 1954, 1:374.

[15] For an extensive discussion of the idea that poetry gives vent to one's sorrow or grievances as an important principle in Chinese literature and literary

> Poetry is where intent goes. At heart it is intent, and let out in words, it is poetry. When emotion is moved inside, it takes shape in words. When words are not enough, one sighs; when sighing is not enough, one draws out the words and sings; and when singing is not enough, without knowing it, one's hands wave and one's feet start to dance.[19]

It is entirely reasonable to understand the "Great Preface" as speaking of the composition of poems in the *Book of Poetry* as the spontaneous articulation of the poets' intentions and emotions, even though we do not know who the poets are as individuals. Here again, the other ancient collection of poetry, the *Songs from the South*, and the central author figure in that collection, Qu Yuan, would help us understand the idea that poetry gives vent to one's grievances and repressed feelings and thoughts.

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criticism, see Qian Zhongshu 1985, 101-16. For an English translation of Qian's book, see Qian Zhongshu 2014.

[16] Jiao Xun 1954, 1:377.

[17] Ibid., 1:428.

[18] James Liu 1988, 96.

[19] *Mao shi zhengyi* 1980, 1:269-70.

Given the huge differences in language, culture, geographical and historical conditions between China and Greece, it may seem difficult to find things comparable that encompass both the Homeric epics and the Chinese *Book of Songs*. By putting the two essays by Most and Schaberg together, however, we can see that the Homeric epics and the *Book of Songs*, standing at the beginning of these two great traditions as canonical texts, do have a number of comparable elements, for they constitute the spiritual and intellectual resources of cultural values in their respective traditions, provide models for later poets and writers to imitate and emulate, and offer the essential materials for education. Citation and pedagogy are important manifestations of the canonicity of both texts, and comparing them under these two categories reveals interesting commonalities as well as differences.

The Homeric epics and the *Book of Songs* were the main canonical texts in their respective cultures, continuously quoted, alluded to, and discussed. When we look at the ways in which these texts were cited, however, we may find a striking difference, as citations of the texts of Homer appeared for the most part in the intellectual sphere, that is, they were quoted by poets, historians, and philosophers, while verses from the *Book of Songs* were often quoted not just in philosophical texts but also, as we find in the *Zuo Tradition*, on occasions of diplomatic exchanges and negotiations by state officials in the political sphere. Moreover, while Homer occupied a position of high prestige in ancient Greece, some poets, historians, and particularly philosophers often cited him as a negative foil for their own work or argument, or even open critique. In contrast, the authority of the *Book of Songs* was much less questioned and its citations were mostly in the affirmative to support or illuminate an argument, and to lend eloquence and cultural prestige.

As canonical texts, both Homer and the *Book of Songs* were important for the education of the young and provided an intellectual background for all the elites as their shared knowledge base. That is the reason why they could be so widely cited and referred to for various purposes, which in turn consolidated their permanence and canonicity. As canonical texts in ancient Greece and China, the Homeric epics and the *Book of Songs* were not “literature” in a modern sense, but were exemplary texts that were supposed to offer important values in spiritual, moral, social and political terms for the society. When the poetic texts were perceived to fall short of the expectations regarding such high values in any way, their canonicity would be called into question and become a major problem, which would give rise to ingenious interpretive strategies in both the Greek and the Chinese traditions. Therefore, apart from citation and pedagogy, another important area where comparison can be interesting and profitable is that of hermeneutics—the exegetical tradition of the interpretation of Homer and the commentary tradition on the Chinese classic.

In both Greek and Chinese hermeneutic traditions, the reading and interpretation of the canon has a fascinating trajectory of lifting the poems' meaning from the literal to the allegorical level, and both are closely related to the canonicity of Homer in ancient Greece and the *Book of Songs* as a Confucian classic. When Plato and other Greek philosophers questioned the appropriateness of the Homeric epics as edifying texts for the education of the young, their critique gave rise to allegory as a way to defend Homer's canonicity. In the quarrel between philosophy and poetry, or "the rebellion of Logos against Myth," as Ernst Robert Curtius remarks, "the Greeks wished to renounce neither Homer nor science. They sought for a compromise and found it in the allegorical interpretation of Homer."[20] Robert Lamberton also argues that because Homer and Hesiod were the earliest of poets, they enjoyed a unique position of honor and respect among the Greeks who, as a matter of principle, held anything old and ancient in great veneration. So, even if some passages in Homer may shock or offend their sense of propriety, they would find allegory as a way to make it palatable, to accept Homer as entirely appropriate, because in allegorical interpretation, what seems shocking and inappropriate on the literal level of meaning is transferred to a different level of "deeper meaning" that conforms to whatever is expected of Homer as a canonical text. The initial response in reading Homer may be a shock, but "tradition demanded that this response somehow be made compatible with the dignity of the divine and the respect due the text itself by virtue of its antiquity."[21] "Allegorical interpretation begins in earnest in the sixth century BCE, with the philosophic interpretation of Homer," Jon Whitman also confirms. Such philosophic interpretations may have different motives and purposes, but their effect, says Whitman, "was the same: the poetic text turned into a mere fiction hiding underlying philosophic truths."[22]

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[20] Curtius 1973, 204.

[21] Lamberton 1986, 11-12.

When we turn to the commentary tradition on the *Book of Songs*, we find an amazing similarity, in terms of interpretive methodology, to the allegorization of Homer. If, in the case of Homer, allegorical interpretation arose to defend his canonicity against any charge of inappropriateness, the Chinese commentary tradition provided an interpretive framework that precludes the reading of poems in the *Book of Songs* in a literal sense, particularly those poems that seem to speak of love with even a hint of eroticism, and thereby prevents any charge of inappropriateness in the Confucian canon. Every poem in the *Book of Songs* comes with a "minor preface" that leads the reader in his or her understanding, and such a "preface" often contextualizes the poem in a historical framework based on the *Zuo Tradition*. Let us look at just one example, poem 86 in the Mao text:

O that crafty boy,
He does not talk with me.
All because of you,
It makes me unable to eat.

O that crafty boy,
He does not eat with me.
All because of you,
It makes me unable to rest.

It is natural to read this poem as a lover's complaint, because the speaker in the poem has lost appetite and is suffering from insomnia, all because of "that crafty boy." The "minor preface," however, points in a totally different direction. "Crafty boy," it says, "is a satire on Hu. He could not manage state affairs with the good ones, so a devious minister usurps all the power."[23] This is a rather heavy imposition on the text that says nothing about state affairs or ministers but, by putting the poem in a historical frame, the "minor preface" determines that the poem is a political satire on Hu, that is, Count Zhao of Zheng, who has jeopardized the state by entrusting a notoriously perfidious minister with power, while ignoring the wise counsel of his loyal advisors. Instead of a young woman, as we might have assumed in our "naive" reading, the speaker in the poem is now identified as a good and loyal adviser alienated from the Count, and he is complaining that his anxieties about the state have made him unable to eat or sleep. Thus, instead of giving a poetic text an allegorical interpretation, as in the case of Greek allegoresis of Homer, the poems in the Chinese *Book of Songs* traditionally came with their "minor prefaces" that already provided an allegorical framework within which the reader was directed to understand the poems as morally or politically appropriate. The texts of Homer and the *Book of Songs* are, of course, different, and so are the concrete details of their interpretations and commentaries, but from a theoretical point of view, the hermeneutics of both traditions have a great deal to tell us about the nature of canon, the potential challenge to canonicity, and interpretive strategies that defend the canonicity of the classics. Therefore, Homer and the *Book of Songs* may have the possibility of intriguing and fruitful comparisons in a hermeneutic project, a project that looks into the nature of, the tension between, and the complex relationship of, the literal sense and the allegorical meaning. But that is a project for perhaps another occasion of scholarly discussion.

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[22] Whitman 1987, 20.

[23] *Mao shi zhengyi* 毛詩正義 [*The Correct Meaning of the Mao Text of the Book of Poetry*], in Ruan Yuan 阮元 (ed.), *Shisan jing zhushu* 十三經注疏 [*Thirteen Classics with Annotations*], 74b, 1:342.

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1

ILIAD AND *ODYSSEY*: HOMER'S EPIC NARRATIVES

Fritz-Heiner MUTSCHLER and *Ernst A.* SCHMIDT

The subject of this paper is the characteristic formal elements and structural principles of Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. By the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* we mean the two works as we have them now, i.e. in the literary form in which they have become foundational texts of Western culture. The conjecture that these texts – or rather their predecessors – were originally created and recreated as ever-changing pieces of oral poetry is a conjecture nowadays shared by the majority of scholars, as is the conviction that this provenance has left its traces in the Homeric texts we have. We agree with these assumptions, but are not here interested in reconstructing the coming into being of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.[1] Instead, we will focus on describing and interpreting the shape of the two poems after they had become literature (i.e. texts fixed and transmitted in a written form), whenever this might have happened.

In terms of contents, the two epics are concerned with the Trojan War and its aftermath. The *Iliad* tells the story of the "wrath of Achilles". The greatest Greek hero is offended by King Agamemnon, the leader of the Greek army. He withdraws from fighting until the Trojans gain the upper hand, break into the Greek camp, and start burning the Greek ships. At this moment, Achilles agrees for his friend Patroclus to join the battle. Patroclus pushes the Trojans back, but in the end is killed by Hector, the son of King Priam and strongest defender of Troy. Achilles settles his dispute with Agamemnon, resumes fighting, and takes revenge for Patroclus. By killing Hector, he seals both the fall of

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[1] On this topic, see Finkelberg in this volume.

Troy and his own death. The *Odyssey* narrates the final phase of Odysseus' wanderings and his homecoming. After leaving the nymph Calypso, on whose island – after the loss of all his ships and comrades – he has spent seven years, Odysseus takes to sea on a raft. He is hit by another storm and washed ashore in the country of the Phaeacians. There he is well received, reveals his identity, and recounts his adventures since the fall of Troy. A Phaeacian ship brings him secretly back to his home Ithaca where, with the help of his son, Telemachus, and some loyal servants, he succeeds in taking revenge on the suitors who for many years have been beleaguering his wife Penelope. Thus, husband and wife are reunited, and, in the end, even peace with the families of the suitors is achieved.[2]

That, basically, is the content of the two texts whose formal features and architectonic structures we wish to describe in the following pages.

Formal Elements

The *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* are epic poems, i.e. long narratives in poetic form.[3] The most obvious component of this poetic form is the rhythmic shape of the two texts, the fact that they are composed in a certain meter, the so-called dactylic hexameter.[4]

Meter

A meter is constituted by the regular sequence of opposite elements. In English and German, this is the regulated sequence of stressed and unstressed syllables. In ancient Greek, which does not know a dynamic word accent, it is the regular sequence of long and short syllables. A syllable counts as long if it contains a long vowel or a diphthong, or if the vowel is followed by two or more consonants. Otherwise, it counts as short.

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[2] For more detailed summaries of both works, see Andersen in this volume.

[3] As such, they have parallels in other cultures in which the foundational texts are narratives of similar kind (see Foley 2004). In sharp contrast, China's foundational text is a collection of ca. 300 relatively short poems.

[4] For solid introductions to the Homeric hexameter, see Patzer 1996, 23-60, and West 1997. Cf. also Clark 2004, 119-23, and Hackstein 2011a, 26-32.

A dactyl is the combination of one long syllable with two short syllables. A dactylic hexameter consists – in principle – of six such units, called feet, a first modification being that the last foot consists of only two syllables, the first long, the second long or short:

– - - | – - - | – - - | – - - | – - - | – x

If the dactylic hexameter appeared only in this basic form, several difficulties would arise. The continuous repetition of the verse over thousands of lines would be tiring; the number of words that could be fitted into this pattern would be limited; and the distance from everyday language would be big. With respect to all three points, it is important that the possible variety of the line is significantly increased by the fact that the two short syllables in each foot can be replaced by one long syllable, this substitution being rather rare in the fifth foot. Thus, the dactylic hexameter can be represented in the following way:

$$- \underset{-}{-\,-} \mid - \underset{-}{-\,-} \mid - \underset{-}{-\,-} \mid - \underset{-}{-\,-} \mid - \underset{(-)}{-\,-} \mid - \mathrm{x}$$

By this modification, the danger of monotony and the difficulty of adapting words to the metric pattern are considerably reduced, as is the distance from spoken language, without being annihilated.

There is, however, more to be said about Homeric verse. The dactylic hexameter is usually divided into several sections, called *cola*. These sections are formed by word or sense boundaries within the line. Breaks within a foot are called *caesurae*; breaks at the end of a foot are called *diaireseis*. At a number of points, breaks are particularly frequent. Thus, in more than 98% of Homeric hexameters, there is a word-end either after the first long syllable or after the first short syllable of the third foot. In many of these cases, word boundary coincides with sense boundary and often a syntactic break. In this way, the line is divided into two relatively equal halves. Very frequently, in addition to this *caesura*, roughly in the middle of the line, one finds a word boundary after the first long syllable of the fourth foot, or between the fourth and the fifth foot. Finally, word boundary often occurs between the first and the second foot, or after the first long syllable of the second foot. As a consequence of all of this, each line is, in one way or another, divided into two or three, sometimes four, cola of recurring rhythmic shape. Thus, the text gains further in rhythmic relief and variety, but as the number of possibilities is, nevertheless, limited, the steadiness of the epic flow is still preserved.

One last point must be considered: the atmospheric or emotional value of the dactylic hexameter. Here, of course, caution is advisable since every judgment in this matter seems to depend on subjective impressions. For this reason, it is welcome that ancient rhetoric, or else philology, already dealt with this question and developed its own theory. As it seems, this theory goes back to Damon of Athens (fifth cent. BCE), but we get glimpses of it through Plato, who refers to it in his *Republic*,[5] and through Aristotle, who probably follows it in his *Poetics* and in his *Rhetoric*. In the former work, we read:

> As for the meter, the heroic measure [= the dactylic hexameter] has proved its fitness by the test of experience. If a narrative poem in any other meter or in many meters were now composed it would be found incongruous. For of all measures the heroic is the stateliest and the most massive; and hence it most readily admits rare words and metaphors, which is another point in which the narrative form of imitation stands alone. … Hence no one has ever composed a poem on a grand scale in any other than heroic verse. Nature itself, as we have said, teaches the choice of the proper measure.[6]

As we see, for a recipient like Aristotle, whose testimony we can take as representative at least of his time, the metrical form of the Homeric poems created an atmosphere of heroic steadfastness and weightiness appropriate to the action and the characters described.

Language

Concerning the language of Homer, the philosopher says something comparable, as we will see in a moment. For present-day scholars, Homeric language is a complex phenomenon.[7] As in the case of other genres of Greek literature, the language of epic has an affinity to one of the Greek regional dialects, in this case to Ionic Greek. But Homeric Greek is not simply Ionic Greek. In addition to Ionic elements, there are Aeolic elements in the text as well as certain Atticisms. But that is not all. Homeric Greek represents not only a geographical (or synchronic) but also a chronological (or diachronic) mixture: besides the "regular" forms of the Greek or dialects of "Homer's" time – whatever time that might precisely be – it contains both archaisms and neologisms. How are we to explain this complex situation?

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[5] 3.399e8ff.

[6] 1459b31ff. (translation Butcher 1951, as are all translations from Aristotle's *Poetics*).

[7] On Homeric language, the classic is Meister 1921. More recently, see Horrocks 1997. See also Hackstein 2011b, 33-45, and the linguistic contributions in Andersen and Haug 2012.

As one can imagine, the process of coming into being and that of transmission have been adduced for this purpose, and it is indeed probable that the linguistic shape of the texts is, to a large extent, the result of this process. But how exactly things developed over the decades and centuries is a matter of dispute, and this is certainly not the place to try to provide a conclusive answer to the question.

Independently of this problem, however, two points can be made with relative certainty. One concerns the technical, the other the expressive aspect of the matter. It seems to be clear that one reason for "Homer's" openness to different regional varieties and different temporal stages of Greek is the fact that such openness considerably facilitated verse making, i.e. the adaptation of words and sentences to meter. The more variants of a form or a word were available the easier it was for the poet to find the proper match for his respective metrical needs.[8] But the technical advantage of the specific character of Homeric language does not exclude an expressive function. Homeric language was never spoken by anyone. With these described particularities, it was, to use Karl Meister's term, a "Kunstsprache". As such, it corresponds to Aristotle's idea that non-triviality is a mark of the *lexis* of poetry,[9] that "variation from what is usual makes language appear more stately",[10] and that "in verse such effects … are fitting, since persons and things there spoken of are comparatively remote from ordinary life".[11] This applies all the more to epic, which the philosopher calls somewhat later "a proud and stately affair".[12] If we add the fact that, with its participation in several of the regional versions of Greek, Homeric language also gained a certain pan-Hellenic character, it seems obvious that it was the appropriate medium for the great epic narratives that were soon to become treasures of the nation's cultural heritage.

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[8] On this aspect, see e.g. Patzer 1996, 60-86.

[9] *Poetics* 1458a18ff.

[10] *Rhetoric* 1404b8.

[11] *Rhetoric* 1404b12-14.

[12] *Rhetoric* 1406b3.

Formulas and Set Phrases

If one moves from language to style, the first phenomenon to catch one's attention is, of course, the famous formulas and set phrases, which, with their regular recurrence, contribute considerably to the narrative's stylistic coloring.[13] The best known are proper names accompanied by an adjective or another modifier, such as "swift-footed Achilles", "lord of men Agamemnon" or "much-suffering, godlike Odysseus". But there are also common nouns accompanied by an attribute like "the wine-colored sea" or "the spear casting a long shadow". In addition, there are set phrases, sometimes whole lines, that denote specific recurring events, such as "a word escaping the fence of [someone's] teeth" or "early-born, rosy-fingered Eos making her appearance". One thing that makes these formulas and set phrases easy to remember is the fact that they are related to the cola system of the hexametric line,[14] which is to say that because of their rhythmic shape they always appear in the same place in the line, filling out the same colon or cola.

In twentieth-century scholarship, these elements of repetition and their relation to the metrical system gained eminent importance as they played a decisive role in the debate about Homer's epics as oral poetry. This debate was launched, or rather re-launched,[15] by Milman Parry, who analyzed Homer's epics in comparison with the poems of living oral poets in the former Yugoslavia.[16] His thesis was that the diction of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* is, to a large extent, formulaic because, like the poems performed and documented in Yugoslavia, the two works were oral poetry, i.e. creations of a poet who, without knowledge – or at any rate, the usage – of writing but relying on a stock of metrically fixed formulas and set phrases, at each performance, composed an ever new version of his narrative. Parry's ideas met with both enthusiastic acclaim and embittered resistance, and thus initiated decades of fierce discussion.[17]

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[13] For general presentations of the phenomenon and the problems connected with it, see Russo 1997, Edwards 1992, Clark 2004, 123-34, Friedrich 2011, 45-64 (all with further literature).

[14] See above 231.

[15] "Re-launched" since Parry had an early predecessor in Friedrich August Wolf, the "inventor" of the "Homeric question" and others.

[16] For a collection of Parry's papers, see Parry 1971.

By now, things seem to have somewhat calmed down, with the result that the majority of scholars agree that the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, even if they themselves should not be pieces of oral poetry, are, at any rate, creations derived from a long tradition of oral poetry, just as, on the other hand, most scholars share the view that there is much in these creations that goes beyond the mere piecing together of formulas, set phrases, etc., and that demands interpretation other than the explanation of the technicalities of composition.[18] Perhaps not a majority view, but a view we adhere to, is that even if one considers these elements of repetition as "essential tools of composition in the tradition of Greek oral poetry",[19] one should, nevertheless, in their case too, ask about the aesthetic effect they had and still have on the recipient. We will do so in a moment in connection with another such element, but first we would like to look at an "ornamental" device that has always been considered just as characteristic for Homeric epic as the formulas and set phrases: the simile.[20]

Similes

It is striking that, whereas we do not find a frequent use of metaphor in Homer's two poems, we do meet several hundred similes, i.e. formal comparisons introduced by a term meaning "like" or "as". These similes can differ considerably in length, from the term of comparison plus a single noun to eight or nine lines of veritable comparison narrative. On the whole, the similes leave a strong imprint on Homeric diction and it seems worthwhile to briefly ponder their function.

Two points are of particular importance. The fundamental function of similes is illustration. By the introduction of a simile, the poet retards the narrative in order to illustrate a certain element of the "Geschehen" and, by illustration, give it weight. The juxtaposition of a corresponding image lets the recipient see the illustrated act, person, scene, etc., in an additional light, and makes him re-feel or re-think it more intensely.[21] Sometimes, the illustration concerns the external appearance of an object or a person.[22] Much more often, however, the similes refer to the emotions or sentiments of one or various persons involved in the action.[23] In addition, similes can have an effect beyond the immediate context if, by the similarity of their imagery, they point to a deeper connection of the persons, actions or situations illustrated.[24]

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[17] For a helpful documentation of the debate, see Latacz 1979.

[18] See the wise remarks in Lesky 1963, 82f.

[19] Clark 2004, 118.

[20] On this topic, the classic is Fränkel 1921. See also the articles republished in De Jong 1999, vol. III, 299-382. For a recent introduction, see Buxton 2004.

The second point of interest is the imagery taken by itself. Through the imagery of the similes, the poet can open up the world of the main action and bring into view spheres of life otherwise excluded from the narrative. This aspect is more important for the *Iliad* than for the *Odyssey*. The latter contains significantly fewer similes than the former and, as it were, needs them less since its action reaches out into a larger and much more diversified world than that of the other poem.[25] In the *Iliad*, however, it is only by the similes – and the description of Achilles' new shield in Book 18 – that the representation of the restricted world of heroic fighting is supplemented by glimpses into the sphere of the daily life of common people and into the world of nature: of animals, plants, rivers and sea, weather and seasons. In this way, the similes help to locate the heroic action within the larger cosmos of life as a whole.[26]

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[21] See Fränkel 1962, 45.

[22] As when e.g. the radiance of Achilles' spear is compared to the brightness of the evening star moving along among the other stars in the darkness of the night (Iliad 22.317f.)

[23] As in many similes that illustrate the emotions of a warrior meeting the enemy, e.g. the two similes that, at the beginning of Book 3 of the *Iliad*, contrast Menelaus and Paris at the moment they see each other, comparing the former to a hungry lion who is glad to hit upon a big carcass and devours it greedily in spite of dogs and hunters around him (23-6), the latter to a man who suddenly comes upon a snake in a mountain glade and, overcome by fear, startles back, trembling and pale (33-5). For similes illustrating psychic processes, see Patzer 1996, 118-30.

[24] This is always the case when the recipient remembers the "Familienzusammenhang des Bildes", i.e. other similes that use the same image (see Fränkel 1962, 45). Thus, for example, all the similes that compare a warrior to a lion are somehow connected. But there are also a few more specific cases. In the *Odyssey* Book 8, Odysseus – in a most striking reversal of sexes – is compared to a woman weeping over her mortally wounded husband (523-30). Corresponding to this, Penelope in Book 23 is compared to men who, having been hit by a storm, are finally washed ashore after much suffering (233-8). Concerning the significance of these two "reverse similes" for the depiction of Odysseus and Penelope as a model couple, see Felson and Slatkin 2004, 112.

[25] See Fränkel 1962, 48.

Typical Scenes

Returning from the theme of "ornament" to that of "construction", we have to take up once again the topic of repetition. Repetition is not limited to the formulas and set phrases already discussed, but occurs also on the next level of narrative construction, that of scenes. As early as 1933, Walter Arend pointed out that the Homeric epics are full of "typische Szenen", typical scenes or type-scenes, i.e. recurring situations that are described in relatively analogous terms.[27] Arend examined scenes of arrival, sacrifice and meal, journey, dressing and arming, reflection before a decision, assembly, oath, bath, etc., and showed that in each of these type-scenes the poet treats the same components of action in the same sequence and, to a large extent, using the same formulas.[28] In the following decades, others have supplemented and further refined Arend's observations,[29] the basic correctness of which is generally agreed upon.

As to their interpretation, it is not surprising that for Milman Parry, who managed to see and react to Arend's book just prior to his untimely death, the repetitions that the German scholar had observed were to be seen in the context of the orality of the Homeric poems. For Parry, the stable patterns of type-scenes were simply another means enabling the oral poet to compose, or rather re-compose, his song anew at each performance.[30] No doubt there is some truth in this. But the fact that the type-scenes may very well have had this technical significance for the producer should not prevent us from reflecting on the aesthetic effect they, and other elements of repetition, had on the recipient.

The direction in which to look for this effect has been pointed out by Lesky and Dihle,[31] among others. The regular application of the same *epitheta* to various persons and things, the repetition of set phrases to denote specific actions, and the recurrence of stable patterns in the presentation of type-scenes gave the recipient the impression of a world in which persons and things had their fixed place, of a world that had its rules and laws and with which – in spite of its distance from one's own world – one soon felt familiar. But this is only one side of the coin. At the same time, the principle of frequent and far-reaching repetition had the advantage that with only minor changes the poet could give a line, a passage, or a scene its particular touch, and that, against the backdrop of recurring patterns, the recipient could perceive and appreciate differentiation and individual design.[32]

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[26] More extensively on this topic, see Andersen in this volume.

[27] Arend 1933.

[28] See the analysis of arming scenes in Arend 1933, 92-7; Armstrong 1958; Clark 2004, 134f.; of meal-scenes in Latacz 1991, 12-17.

[29] See Armstrong 1958; Fenik 1968; Fenik 1974, 153-71; Edwards 1992.

[30] Parry 1936.

[31] Lesky 1963, 82f., Dihle 1967, 16-18.

Direct Speech

Of all the formal elements of Homeric narrative, direct speech is perhaps the most striking.[33] As Homerists know, around 45% of the *Iliad* and more than two thirds of the *Odyssey* consist of direct speech.[34] There is little indirect, i.e. reported speech (or inner monologue). Almost all of what the agents say (or think) appears in direct speech.

It is not surprising that the speeches in both epics vary considerably in length and in function. Concerning length, a quick survey shows that there are short speeches of appeal or encouragement that comprise just a few lines, dialogues of medium length, as between Hector and Andromache in the *Iliad*[35] or Odysseus and Calypso in the *Odyssey*,[36] really long speeches, like that of old Phoenix in Book 9, who tries in 170 lines[37] to persuade Achilles to rejoin the fighting, and finally, the four books of continuous direct speech in which Odysseus narrates his adventures to the Phaeacians. As to the different kinds of speeches, a look at Book 1 of the *Iliad* suffices to get an impression of the possible variations: "from threats of violence to prayers, supplications and attempts to make peace …, and from human squabbles to the most sublime utterance of the father of gods and men".[38]

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[32] On this point, see the analysis of meal-scenes in Latacz 1991, 12-17.

[33] On speeches in Homer, see the articles republished in De Jong 1999, vol. III, 201-97; Griffin 2004.

[34] *Iliad*: 7,018 out of 15,690 lines; *Odyssey*: 8,225 out of 12,103 lines.

[35] *Iliad* 6.407-96.

[36] *Odyssey* 6.149-224.

[37] *Iliad* 9.434-605.

However, what interests here is less the role of the single speech in its particular context than the contribution of direct speeches to the effect of Homeric narrative in general. As to the character of this effect, Plato's famous critique of poetry in general, and of Homer in particular, in the third and tenth books of the *Republic*, gives useful hints. After having formulated his concern about the contents of stories told to children and youths, Socrates turns to the form in which these stories are presented. He distinguishes between "simple narrative" and "narrative through imitation"[39] and criticizes Homer for not only speaking in his own voice but for also "speaking as Chryses and making us believe that not Homer but the old priest was speaking".[40] It is Homer's extended use of direct speech that is here at issue. What disturbs the philosopher is the fact that, in contrast to simple narrative,[41] this form of representation invites identification with the *personae* of the narrative and with their emotions.[42] This alone seems bad enough, but it becomes even more problematic since Homer does not restrict his use of direct speech to morally exemplary characters, such as brave and considerate men; he also uses it for heroes quarreling and abusing each other or lamenting about their misfortune, for women in different sorts of emotional upheaval, and even for slaves.[43]

Using Plato's observations, but interpreting them in Homer's favor, we can say the following: On the one hand, Homeric narrative consists of "simple narration" with the narrator speaking in his own voice. The tone is “discrete and neutral”.[44] The narrator dispenses with comments and presents what happens simply and, so to speak, objectively.[45] On the other hand, this kind of straightforward third-person narrative is continually supplemented with “narrative through imitation”, i.e. shorter and longer pieces of direct speech. In these speeches, the – carefully individualized – agents reflect, comment, react to, and try to influence what is happening. The recipient is invited to sympathize with the thoughts and feelings that find expression, he participates in the mental and emotional processes of the persons involved. Since the pieces of direct speech are attributed to different persons and groups, their collected subjectivity creates a kind of second degree objectivity that does justice to most of those involved in the narrated actions.

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[38] Griffin 2004, 166.

[39] 392d5f.: *diêgêsis haplê, diêgêsis dia mimêseôs gignomenê.*

[40] 393a7-b1.

[41] Of which Plato, with a summary of the beginning of Book 1, creates an example (393d8-394b1).

[42] In the immediate context of Book 3, Plato speaks of this effect with respect to those who *produce* poetry and to a *particular kind of recipient*, the actor. In the corresponding passages of Book 10, he speaks about the effect on the *recipients in general.* Consequently Griffin, in his interpretation of the passages in Book 3, is not unjustified when he claims that "Homer [i.e. according to Plato] damaged the self-control of the audience by making his characters express their feelings so freely. The spectators felt licensed to weep and wail" (Griffin 2004, 157).

[43] See in particular 10.605a2-607a9.

Summing up, one can say that with the both variable and expressive dactylic hexameter, with a “Kunstsprache” that produced a certain distance from daily life and, at the same time, gave the poems a kind of Panhellenic touch, with the composition-facilitating and atmosphere-creating formulas of set phrases and type-scenes, and with the stylistically effective devices of simile and direct speech, “Homer” had at his disposal a set of formal elements that was well suited for the creation of highly powerful narratives.

Structural Principles

Having discussed these elements that in all probability were, at least in part, responsible for the effect of the Homeric narratives, we turn now to the second topic of our investigation and ask: What are the structural principles at work in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*?

Static Structures

In a study of the structure of the *Iliad* in one of the more recent companions to Homer, Seth Schein has pointed out that this work “is organized according to two complementary, structural principles”: one that can be called “static and symmetrical” and that is “independent of the plot of the poem”; and another that is “dynamic and linear or progressive" and that "involves the movement of the poem from beginning to end".[46] This observation is valid and it is also valid for the *Odyssey*.

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[44] Fränkel 1962, 43.

[45] That things are more complicated, has become very clear through De Jong 1987.

The first structural principle can take on two forms: ring-composition (a-b-c / c-b-a) and parallelism (a-b-c / a-b-c).[47] Both forms occur frequently both in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* and they occur on all levels of the texts. In the *Iliad*, ring-composition can be found in many speeches;[48] in the *Odyssey*, the hero's conversation with this mother in the underworld (11.173-203) is a good example.[49] Yet axial symmetry also appears in more extended sections of the narrative, as in Book 21 of the *Odyssey* with respect to Penelope, Odysseus, and the bow.[50] In the case of the *Iliad*, it is even effective in the whole poem, where symmetrical correspondences between the first three and the last three books have been noted.[51]

Parallelism occurs no less frequently than ring-composition, as can be observed in many speeches of the *Iliad*.[52] For the *Odyssey*, Stephen Tracy has claimed parallelism even as a "dominant structural mode"[53] being operant on the level of single episodes, such as Odysseus' descent to the underworld (11.51-627), on the level of series of books, as books 9-12 with Odysseus' narrative of his adventures, and on the level of the whole poem, where the first and the second half can be seen as consisting of three times four books, with the corresponding tetrads showing pronounced thematic parallels.[54]

These Homeric symmetries have been connected with the so-called geometric art on Greek pottery of the eighth century BCE, and it seems obvious that there is a shared sense of correspondence and balance at work. On the other hand, if one thinks of, for example, the poetry books of Augustan Rome in whose arrangement-patterns – seven hundred years later and in a very different socio-cultural environment – both kinds of symmetry play just as important a part, one may wonder whether we are not confronted here with the effect of a fundamental human desire for balance and completion. But however this may be, there can be no doubt that both Homeric poems are shaped by a strong sense of proportion, balance and order and that the effect of this is in part responsible for their appeal.

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[46] Schein 1997, 345.

[47] In more scientific terms, one would probably have to speak of "axial symmetry" and "translational symmetry".

[48] See Lohmann 1970, 12-30 (with earlier literature).

[49] See Tracy 1997, 361-3.

[50] Tracy 1997, 363f.

[51] E.g. the supplications of Chryses and of Priam with the releases of daughter and body of the son in books 1 and 24; the presentations of the Greek contingents and their leaders in the so-called Catalogue of Ships and in the description of the funeral games for Patroclus in books 2 and 23; and the duels of Menelaus and Paris and of Achilles and Hector in books 3 and 24. For a more detailed analysis, see Schein 1997, 345-7.

[52] Lohmann 1970, 30-40.

[53] Tracy 1997, 372.

[54] Tracy 1997, 372-7.

Dynamic Structures

The structural patterns so far discussed concern the surface, the formal appearance of the poems rather than their artistic essence. This changes once we turn to the so-called "dynamic and linear or progressive" structures, those that are related to the actions narrated and that unfold in time. According to the most prominent of ancient critics, it is here that we have to locate one of Homer's great achievements, an achievement that distinguished him from most other epic poets. This achievement consists in giving the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* thematic unity.[55]

How is this *thematic unity* achieved? Three points are important. First, Homer does not narrate all the ten years of the Trojan War or all the ten years of Odysseus' wanderings. Instead, he limits his narrative to 51 and 40 days, of the tenth year of war and wanderings respectively.[56] Second, in each case, the focus of attention is on one hero. The *Iliad* names its hero in the first line: Achilles, son of Peleus. The first word of the *Odyssey* is "the man" as the object of the Muse's song. Although his name occurs only in the last line of the prologue (21), he is unambiguously defined in line 2 as the hero who destroyed Troy. Yet, according to Aristotle, the unity of the hero does not suffice to establish the unity of action. Therefore, it is decisive that, third, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* each have one theme, the wrath of Achilles and the homecoming of Odysseus, and it is in the framework of these themes that the episodes that both epics recount are interconnected in such a way that each of them "is the necessary or likely sequel of the preceding one" and that "the transposition or removal of one part makes a difference".[57] This assertion demands a more detailed analysis in both cases.

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[55] See Aristotle, *Poetics*, chap. 8.

[56] Already praised by Aristotle, *Poetics*, 1459a30-7.

The theme of the *Iliad* is Achilles' wrath. Is it possible to determine when it starts and when it ends? The *Iliad* is clear and explicit about the origin or cause of Achilles' wrath: the Muse is asked to start her song from the moment when King Agamemnon and divine Achilles first split in quarrel (*Il.* 1.6f.). But when does Achilles' wrath end, and where does its ending stand in relation to the end of the *Iliad*? This is controversial. Scholars either regard the reconciliation between the hero and Priam (the aged father of the enemy he slew) at the end of the epic as the end of Achilles' wrath,[58] and see his revenge on Hector as a continuation of his initial passion; or they recognize the reconciliation of Agamemnon and Achilles after Patroclus' death (book 19) as the termination of the quarrel and the end of Achilles' wrath.[59] We are inclined to prefer this interpretation, not only because it is unequivocally stated in the text (*Il.* 19.67f. and 75), but also because Achilles' passion for revenge is an emotion quite different from his indignation at experiencing the violation of his honor.[60] If this interpretation is accepted, the question arises if and how books 19 to 24 can be said to belong to that one action that is constituted by the wrath. The answer does not appear to be difficult. *Iliad* 19 to 24 recount the direct consequences of the effects of Achilles' wrath, and the last book of the poem presents a solution that, for a moment, provides respite from war, struggle, and revenge.

The prologue had made clear that the theme of the poem is Achilles' wrath (= "Achilleid") in the sense that its cause is told, its context: the Trojan war (= "Iliad"), and its consequences:[61] the imminent defeat of the Achaeans (= "Iliad"), Patroclus' death at Hector's hand (= "Patrocly"), Achilles' re-entering the war and his slaying of Hector, which will lead to Troy's fall (= "Iliad"), and the final solution of that series of actions in the reconciliation of Achilles and Priam. Thus, the one action of the *Iliad* can be understood as a threefold layer of interdependent actions, in the following way:

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[57] See Aristotle, *Poetics*, 1451a22-34.

[58] See Welcker 1824, 429; Schadewaldt 1938, 134-6; Schadewaldt 1975, 8-12.

[59] See Reinhardt 1961, 24.

[60] It has also been noted that the prologue mentions only Achaeans as victims of his anger (See Reinhardt 1961, 20).

[61] See Latacz 1979, 16-18: According to the prologue "Achilleus' wrath [. . .] shall be dealt with in respect to its consequences"; "the theme of the wrath [. . .] is given a firm position in a great temporal and causal connection."

1. The poem called *Iliad* is an "Iliad", i.e. an epic dealing with the great struggle of the Greeks against Troy because of Helen's abduction by the Trojan prince Paris. Of the whole story – from its very beginning, with the judgment of Paris, who gave preference to Aphrodite over Hera and Athena and won the most beautiful woman of the world, to its end, the conquest of Troy and the destruction of the town – only the decisive period is narrated: a series of events in the last, the tenth, year of the battles, with the death of Hector, the best of the Trojans and their only true support and defender. Nevertheless, all the other events of the Trojan war are continuously present, not only Troy's imminent fall, doomed to happen after Hector's death, but also the happenings that lead up to what is told in the epic.

2. The phase of the Trojan war that is narrated is caused and constituted by Achilles. The "Iliad" becomes an "Achilleid". But this "Achilleid" remains an Iliadic "Achilleid". For it does not present all the events of the hero's life chronologically, in a narrative starting from Peleus' successful wooing of the goddess Thetis and their subsequent wedding, then, following Achilles from his birth and education to further adventures and deeds of heroic prowess until his early death, after his slaying of Hector and before the fall of Troy. These events, past and future ones, enter the epic again and again by way of remembering and foreshadowing, always with the intention of making them bear on present constellations and events.

3. The "Achilleid" of the "Iliad" starts with the event that is the seed of Patroclus' and Hector's deaths, the quarrel with Agamemnon and Achilles' wrath, which is to say, this "Achilleid" is constituted and given its formative principle by a "Patrocly". The gist, the very point of the Iliadic "Achilleid" is the death of Achilles' *hetairos* Patroclus.[62] Achilles' wrath is recounted because of this tragic result.

4. The "Patrocly" begins when the "Achilleid" begins and when the "Iliad" begins. The quarrel about the booty girl Briseis sets into motion a series of events that lead to Patroclus' death. Then, Achilles recon-

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[62] See Jacoby 1933, 179f.: "There can never (this be said to the analytics) have existed an epic nor even a song of Achilles' wrath which did not contain the death of Patroklos."

ciles with Agamemnon, re-enters the war and kills Hector to avenge the latter's killing of Patroclus, and Hector's death is destined to be followed by Achilles' own death. "Patrocly" and "wrath" are one and the same.[63]

5. The start of the epic that Homer has chosen marks the beginning of the three actions: Achilles' wrath is the cause of Troy's fall because of Hector's death at his hand ("Iliad"); Achilles' wrath is the cause of his own death ("Achilleid"); Achilles' wrath is the cause of Patroclus' death ("Patrocly").[64] All these later events, within the epic (Patroclus' and Hector's deaths) and, beyond it (Achilles' death and Troy's fall[65]), are again and again present in the poem.[66] Thus, it is fair to say that the three actions around Ilium, Achilles, Patroclus, are three layers of one action. The *Iliad* narrates one story (*mythos*), it presents the imitation (*mimêsis*) of one action (*praxis*).

The *Odyssey'*s theme of "homecoming" presupposes three localities or spaces reducible to two: the point of departure, the homecomer's route, and his home.[67] The point of departure and the places on his way home may be taken together as one space: "abroad". The problematic locality is home. This is due to the fact that at the hero's home things have changed during his stay at Troy and his return voyage. It is important for the recipient to know whether the homecomer is expected at home or not, whether his people are alive and well, whether they long for him or fear his return, and his claims. Moreover, coming home means more than arrival at home in the bare local sense. Its meaning, at least as the poet understands it, is the return of the traveler to his earlier position, as husband, as father, as son, as master of his house, and as king. This duality of spaces, home and abroad, is constitutive of the story of a coming home; it belongs to its very structure. And it is already underscored by the poet in his prologue: troubles at sea, enforced sojourn on a distant island, as opposed to Ithaca, his home, where, even after arriving, the hero will not yet have escaped his labors (*Od.* 1.16-19). The one action, then, of coming home and being restituted to the former position, is complete in its temporal extension from the point of departure to the beginning of a safe life at home. How does the poet of the *Odyssey* handle this double space and the temporal process of the two parts of the action from the chronological starting-point to the end of the plot?

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[63] For the ideas in this paragraph see Hölscher 1988, 26 and 44; also Hölscher 1994, 24f. Even analytics appear to recognize the identity of wrath and Patrocly or to connect Patroclus' death (book 16) with a supposed original mênis poem. Leaf 1888, 129: "we have in the sixteenth book a perfect piece of the primitive mênis."

[64] Rutherford 1982, 275: "The poet's great design makes the death of Patroclus lead inevitably to the death of Hector, and the slaying of Hector by Achilles in turn precipitates Achilles' own death."

[65] 4.30-67; 15.69-71.

[66] See Rutherford 1982, 276 with note 40, referring to Duckworth 1933.

[67] See Hölscher 1988, 46f. and 49.

As a matter of fact, the poem's narrative does not take its start from the end of the Trojan War. It opens at a very late state of the action with an assembly of the gods who consider the fate of Odysseus. The result of their counseling is to address the situation in two different places: Athena shall head to the hero's home Ithaca, Hermes to Calypso's island Ogygia, the hero's distant sojourn. The duality of spaces leads to a duality if not of actions yet of strands of action and, as soon becomes clear, both strands are related to the spatial situation and the theme of homecoming.

On Ithaca, the state of affairs is critical. At Odysseus' house, the aristocratic youth of Ithaca and the nearby islands woo his wife Penelope, ever more urgently after so many years and the certainty – as they take it – of her husband's death. Odysseus' son Telemachus has come of age and wishes to be master of his heritage. The swarms of suitors, feasting day after day, ruin his estate. Athena suggests that he visit old Nestor at Pylos and Menelaus in Sparta to see if he can get news about his father. Thus, Telemachus, for the sake of his father – like his father – leaves home for abroad. His journey does not lead to any certain knowledge about Odysseus' whereabouts but it nourishes hope that he is still alive. In addition, it puts Telemachus in the position of a homecomer as well. And with the suitors' decision to ambush him, for Odysseus' son, too, homecoming will have to consist of two components: his physical return and the regaining of his legitimate position.

Just as Athena's intervention leads Telemachus to his movement from home to abroad (books 1-4), so Hermes' intervention entails for Odysseus the resumption of his movement from abroad towards home (books 5-8). The hero has already spent seven years on the nymph Calypso's island, the most distant place of sojourn on his return voyage. As a king, and a commander without his fleet, his men, and his booty, he is reduced to a most humble condition, far away from his true social position, exposed, moreover, to the temptation of becoming a god through his marriage with the nymph and forgetting his wife and home. However, Odysseus' extreme outward helplessness and hopelessness is counterpoised by his absolute desire and will to get home. He has completely lost his former spirit of adventure and his worldly curiosity. Thus, the divine intervention finds in him a responsive vessel. And with Hermes' message to the nymph that she release the man, the action has a new start: Odysseus builds a raft and takes off for home. Yet another storm keeps him away from Ithaca and washes him ashore at his penultimate station, the land of the Phaeacians.

For the action to be taken as a whole, the start at a chronologically late phase demands that the preceding episodes be told later. However, the Homeric narrative does not know how to return to earlier events. The only procedure to place them in the narrative is to put them into the mouth of a person who retells them. That is what happens in books 9-12: after introducing himself by his name, his glory, and his home, Odysseus himself becomes the narrator of his wanderings and adventures at the Phaeacian court. This narrative of the earlier adventures from Troy to Ogygia – the so-called *apologoi* – at the Phaeacian court and the poem's start from Ogygia condition one another; each is both cause and effect of the other.

The second half of the poem finally presents the homecoming, first homecoming as the physical return, then homecoming as the re-establishment of the hero's – and his son's – legitimate position. In books 13-16, by uniting Telemachus and Odysseus in the Ithacan countryside, the narrative brings together the two strands of action it has developed in the first half of the work. Then, in books 17-24, father and son, with the help of some faithful servants and in interplay with the intelligent and resourceful Penelope, take revenge on the suitors and thus complete homecoming and reunification. On the whole, Aristotle's judgment seems justified for the *Odyssey* as well; "Homer", in this case too, succeeds in presenting a unified whole, in narrating one *mythos*, even if here he does so in a more complex way than in the *Iliad*.

Homer and the Cycle

The *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* were not the only epics of their time. There were poems dealing with other mythological cycles, like those concerning the struggles around Thebes, the expedition of the Argonauts, the hunt of the Calydonian boar, etc., and there were poems dealing with other parts of the same, i.e. the Trojan cycle. Of these, we know the names and are informed about their basic contents, while the chronological and genetic relationship with the Homeric epics is a matter of dispute.[68] What concerns us here, however, is the fact that of all this bulk of poetry only the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* survived, and not only survived but became highly privileged parts of the Western cultural heritage. Very probably the artistic shape of the two poems had something to do with this success. It is, therefore, of interest that they seem to have shared the formal elements and structural principles discussed in this paper only partly with the epics around them. It can be assumed that those features that made them unique added to their attraction.

There has been agreement that the hexameter, flexible and dignified at the same time, developed centuries before Homer, perhaps already in Mycenaean times,[69] and became the generally used meter of epic song, which it remained until the modern era. Homeric language too, combining different regional dialects and different chronological layers of Greek, was obviously the product of a long development and was, in all probability, shared by contemporary epics. The same applies to those elements of repetition: the *epitheta*, set phrases, and typical scenes, that have been convincingly connected with the original orality of epic poetry.[70]

As to the Homeric similes, things are not as clear-cut. For a long time, similes have been considered as a "late", non-traditional element of Homeric discourse. Recently, however, this view has been questioned.[71] The dispute is not yet decided. But given the lack of textual evidence it is – and will remain – at least uncertain whether the similes were a feature unique to the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* or shared with other poems of the time.

This is different concerning the last formal element dealt with above, the speeches. In this case too, the fact that early epics other than the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* are preserved only in fragments prevents judgment based on direct evidence. But we do have indirect evidence and this from a trustworthy witness. In chapter 24 of Aristotle's *Poetics*, we read:[72]

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[68] About the poems of the "Cycle", see Finkelberg in this volume.

[69] See e.g. West 1997, 133f.

[70] On the "internationality" of these elements, see Latacz 1991, 17-19.

[71] Bakker 2005, 114-35.

> Homer, admirable in all respects, has the special merit of being the only poet who rightly appreciates the part he should take himself. The poet should speak as little as possible in his own person, for it is not this that makes him an imitator. Other poets appear themselves upon the scene throughout, and imitate but little and rarely. Homer, after a few prefatory words, at once brings in a man, or woman, or other personage; none of them wanting in characteristic qualities, but each with a character of his own.

The statement is clear: one feature that distinguished the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* – in Aristotle's eyes favorably[73] – from other epics was the frequency and extent of direct speech they contain. In view of the fact that direct speech amounts to more than 50% of the lines of both epics, it cannot surprise us that this stylistic device attracted the attention of the philosopher. It is, however, noteworthy that he considers this affinity to drama as one of the great assets of Homer's epic narratives.

If we turn to structural principles, we find a comparable situation: lack of direct evidence concerning epics other than the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* but Aristotle's testimony concerning a specific point. As far as the structure of limited passages and sections is concerned, it is reasonable to assume that other epics did not differ much from the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. Ring-composition and parallelism could probably be found here as well as in Homer. With regard to large-scale structure, like that of entire poems, things are more uncertain. Some scholars may be inclined simply to deny that the cyclic poets had the ability for this kind of overarching composition. But there is no way of knowing. Therefore, it is welcome that in this case too we have the testimony of Aristotle, who compares Homer with the other poets and declares:[74]

> Here again then, as has been already observed, the transcendent excellence of Homer is manifest. He never attempts to make the whole war of Troy the subject of his poem though that war had a beginning and an end. … As it is he detaches a single portion, and admits as episodes

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[72] 1460a5-11.

[73] That Plato viewed things differently was pointed out above.

[74] 1458a30ff.

> many events from the general story of the war … All other poets take a single hero, a single period, or an action single indeed, but with a multiplicity of parts. Thus did the author of the *Cypria*[75] and of the *Little Iliad*[76]. For this reason the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* each furnish the subject of one tragedy, or, at the most, of two; while the *Cypria* supplies material for many, and the *Little Iliad* for eight.

Once again, in Aristotle's view, it is the affinity to tragedy, this time the shared unity of action, that made the Homeric poems superior to the other epics and ensured their success with the recipients.

The *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*

To facilitate comparison with the *Book of Songs*, we have in this paper treated the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* in terms of what they have in common rather than in terms of what distinguishes them. But finally, it seems appropriate to point, at least briefly, to some differences that concern points discussed in our analysis.

One of them has already been touched upon: with regard to the frequency of similes there is a striking difference between the two epics. Men and actions in the *Iliad* are contained in a very restricted world. But this world is set against a wider horizon and related to other realities. That happens, first of all, in the numerous similes (about 170),[77] then, additionally, in the pictures on Achilles' shield:[78] men's social life, working people, artisans' work and technical expertise, farmers and shepherds menaced by beasts of prey, bulls killed by lions, deer or doe victims of stronger beasts. The *Odyssey* is much poorer in similes (about 40), obviously due to the fact that the world of Odysseus is not as closed as the heroic and aristocratic horizon of battle in the plain between the coast and the city of Troy. There are more milieus, more general life conditions. There is less need to open up new vistas.[79]

Another, so to speak, complementary difference has the same background. If one looks at the device of direct speech in both epics, the decisive difference consists in the fact that, whereas in the *Iliad* and in large parts of the *Odyssey* we have many speeches of varying length and function as integral parts of the narrator's narrative, in the *Odyssey* we have, in addition, four books of continuous direct speech by a narrator within the narrative: Odysseus, who at the court of the Phaeacians relates his wanderings and adventures (9-12). That this phenomenon appears in the *Odyssey* and not in the *Iliad* is no accident. Both epics narrate the happenings of only a limited number of days in the final year of a ten-year period filled with a specific nexus of events: the war at Troy and Odysseus' wanderings. Thus, there is in principle much to be recounted in addition. But, because the world of the *Iliad* is so closed and limited, in this case, such recounting would be a continuous repetition of the same. In the *Odyssey*, things are different. The world of the *Odyssey* is wide, rich, and partly mysterious and fantastic, and accordingly the events that took place between the destruction of Troy and the final phase of Odysseus' homecoming were varied and colorful. This means that, in their case, indications and brief references are not enough for an appropriate evocation; they must be, and are worth being, narrated at length and in detail.

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[75] Poem on the prehistory and the first part of the Trojan War.

[76] Poem on the final phase of the Trojan War.

[77] Together, 665 lines (see Dihle 1970, 52).

[78] 18.478-616.

[79] On the contents of similes and shield, see also Andersen in this volume.

This brings us to a final point. As mentioned above, for Plato and Aristotle, Homer was the first and greatest of tragic poets.[80] In the same vein, modern scholars have stressed the importance of the Homeric epics for the development of tragedy. However, there can be no doubt that these judgments build more on the *Iliad* than the *Odyssey*. It is the former work that has the inner form of a tragedy; the latter, instead, as has convincingly been pointed out, shows affinity to another genre, one that developed much later: the novel.[81] Suffice it to draw attention to the basic pattern of the *Odyssey* and the Greek erotic novel: they deal with a loving couple, separated for years full of adventures and finally happily reunited after many troubles. Another analogy will be recognized in the simultaneity of the two strands of the narrative. Private accidents and adventures in the framework of a hostile or disorderly world connect the *Odyssey* and the novel. And they share the intended effects of such narration, like surprise and suspense. It seems legitimate to conclude that the heirs and successors of Homer's great narratives are two in number: the tragedy[82] and the novel.

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[80] This implied very different evaluations in the two cases.

[81] Rudolf Borchardt compared the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* thus (Borchardt 1959, 63): Whereas the "form of the *Iliad* […] is the tension between two equally tragic worlds, the Achilleus tragedy and the Hektor tragedy", "the form of the *Odyssey* […] is that of a novel." Borchardt's judgment can be supplemented with Otto Weinreich's statement (Weinreich 1962, 234): "The Greek love novel was the offspring of a liaison which aged epic [meaning the *Odyssey*] formed with the capriciously attractive Hellenistic historiography." Both of these remarks, Borchardt's referring to the form and the structure of the *Odyssey* and Weinreich's referring to the *Odyssey*'s siring the Greek erotic novel, are jointly dealt with and analyzed in substance and depth in Hölscher 1988.

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[82] See Aischylos, T 112a Radt; Plato, *Republic* 595c1-2, 598d7-8; Aristotle, *Poetics* 1459b2-4; see Rutherford 1982 on the limitations of human knowledge in the *Iliad* and in tragedy.

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2

THE *SHIJING*: THE COLLECTION OF THREE HUNDRED[*]

CHEN Zhi and *Nicholas M. WILLIAMS*

This paper describes the characteristic formal elements and structural principles of the *Shijing* anthology. The anthology is a complex synthesis of chronological, geographical, linguistic, and social layers, and this complexity is reflected in the variety of its English translations. Arthur Waley's (1889–1966) rendering of the title as *The Book of Songs* best signals its musical origins, but *The Book of Poetry* reflects its role as the fountainhead of the poetic tradition,[1] while *The Book of Odes* suggests the poems' role in court ritual.[2] In 1891, William Jennings (1847–1927) employed the title *Classic of Poetry*, which properly indicates the anthology's dual nature as both poetry and classic. After all, though some of its poems seem no more than playful love songs, the *Shijing* was adopted as one of the Six Classics (*Liujing* 六經) of Confucianism in ancient times. Yet, the musical patterning of the *Shijing* also remains fundamental to the anthology, so it is from all three of these perspectives—as songs, as poems, and as classic—that we must consider the anthology today. As songs, we can analyze the diction and structure of the individual lines and stanzas; as poems, we can look at the particular genre or form of the individual pieces; but as a classic, we must consider the entire anthology in light of its stratified internal structure.

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[1] As in Legge 1871, *She King or the Book of Poetry*. Similarly, Clement Francis Romilly Allen (1844–1920) translated it as *The Book of Chinese Poetry* (1891).

[2] Karlgren 1950. Launcelot Cranmer-Byng (1872–1945) also translated it as *Book of Odes (Shi-king)* in 1908.

The received text of the *Shijing*, and the only complete version to survive from antiquity, is also known as the Mao 毛 recension. In the Western Han dynasty (206 BCE–7 CE), there were three other major schools of *Shijing* studies, passed down by oral transmission and memorization, and also recognized at the imperial court as standard doctrine: the Qi 齊, the Lu 魯, and the Han 韓.[3] The name of the Mao school derives from the surname of its commentators, Da Maogong 大毛公 (the elder Mao, i.e. Mao Heng 毛亨) and Xiao Maogong 小毛公 (the younger Mao, i.e. Mao Chang 毛萇). The Mao School was formally recognized as the official interpretation of the *Songs* at the beginning of the first century CE. The Mao edition with its complete exegesis is the only Han commentary to survive intact to the modern day (though fragments from the commentaries of the three other schools remain extant). Though recent archaeological discoveries have enhanced our understanding of the *Shijing* prior to the Mao recension, they have not substituted any alternative configuration of the book as a whole. Generally speaking, the textual structure and linguistic features of a certain poem, such as diction, formulaic expressions, repetition and symmetry of the lines and stanzas, and rhyme structure, as seen from various excavated texts, remained relatively stable from the fourth to first centuries BCE, when the poems were canonized and established in official scholarship.[4] The remainder of this chapter, then, will focus on the form and structure of the Mao recension.

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[3] The former three versions, later known as the *jinwen* 今文 (modern text, i.e. *lishu* 隸書, the clerical form current in the Han dynasty) editions, came to be accepted as authoritative during the second century BCE, whereas the Mao version was understood traditionally as representing the *guwen* 古文 (ancient text), a script form antedating the Qin (221–207 BCE). See Wang Guowei 1981b. Some modern sinologists consider the difference between the interpretative traditions of these two texts to be insignificant during the Han dynasty. See Nylan 1994.

[4] There have been numerous discussions about the composition and transmission of the canonical texts and other excavated documents from Warring States to Han times. See Kern 2002 and Richter 2011.

I. Formal Characteristics of the Poems

The formal structure of the *Shijing* cannot be considered apart from the musical and linguistic features of the anthology. The musicality of the *Shijing* poems remains evident today, despite our ignorance as to their original performance practice or even pronunciation. As Arthur Waley wrote:

> . . . when in 1913 I first began to read them, using Couvreur's text and translation, it was not as documents of the past that they interested me . . . . It was simply as poetry that I read the *Songs*, and strangely enough, perhaps, even more as music than as poetry. . . . The text sang, just as the lines of Homer somehow manage to sing despite the barbarous ignorance with which we recite them.[5]

The language of the *Shijing*, Old Chinese, differs dramatically from the dialects of modern Chinese.[6] But, even in their modern Mandarin pronunciations, the songs retain to a striking degree their original assonance, parallelism, rhythm, and rhyme. Moreover, the musicality of the *Shijing* extends from language to global structure, determining the formal features of poems and the divisions of the anthology as a whole.

Music

Regarding the music that originally accompanied the *Shijing*, we have many tantalizing hints, but not the concrete information that might allow us to reconstruct its actual sound. The sayings of Confucius himself already testify to the importance of the music that accompanied the *Shijing*. Thus, it is recorded that Confucius "put the music in order so that the *Ya* and *Song* each attained their proper place."[7]

Moreover, it seems to have been musicians who had the primary charge of the poems throughout the Zhou. Specifically, they were the responsibility of the *gu* 瞽 ("blind musician"), an official title given to those musicians who served at the courts of Zhou and other feudal states.[8] These musicians were responsible for collecting, copying, collating, editing, and circulating the early texts of the *Songs*. According to the *Zhouli* (Rites of Zhou), a third century BCE canon of Zhou etiquette, there were 300 *gu* under the direct supervision of the Music Master, the director of the Music Bureau in a rank equivalent to that of a feudal lord. This Music Master taught the twelve tones and regulated the pitches, and also taught the so-called *liushi* 六詩, or six principles of the *Songs*, namely *feng* 風, *fu* 賦, *bi* 比, *xing* 興, *ya* 雅, and *song* 頌. At the grand banquets or archery ceremonies, the *gu* also played bells and drums in accompaniment.[9] When the king presided at court, he had a variety of officials in attendance including shamans, diviners, scribes, admonishers, and the *gu*.[10] At such times, the *gu* were responsible for presenting poems, newly composed or memorized, to the throne. The effectiveness of the editing work done by the *gu* is apparent from the copious quotations from the *Shijing* that we find in diplomatic, military, and historical documents of the Spring and Autumn period.[11]

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[5] Waley 1954, 326.

[6] The definitive reconstruction and study of the Old Chinese language in English is Baxter 1992. A new reconstruction has recently been published: Baxter and Sagart 2014.

[7] *Analects* 9.15.

The music that accompanied performance of the *Shijing* centered on bells and chimes, in particular, the "two-tone bells" of the Shang and Western Zhou, which released two different tones depending on where they were struck.[12] The *ya* 雅 ritual music in the early Zhou dynasty consisted of complex orchestral performances, including bells, drums, reed-organs, mouth organs, string instruments, flutes, pan-pipes, ocarinas, and others.[13] Music, dances, and songs were configured into various performance suites that differed according to the host's status in the nobility. We can reconstruct these performances from archaeological evidence and descriptions in the various classics on Zhou ritual, as well as the *Zuo zhuan*. Some *Shijing* poems also describe these performances, such as Mao 274 "Zhi jing":

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[8] In ancient China, it was believed that the blind have a sharper faculty of hearing than seeing people, and therefore are better musicians. During the Zhou dynasty, the character *gu* 瞽 (blindness) was also an official title referring to musicians who were in charge of the ritual music and education. It could be that they were not all blind, maybe just the original title meant that and later all sorts of musicians became *gu*. See Kaufmann 1976, 71.

[9] *Zhouli zhushu* 23: 158c, in *Shisanjing zhushu*, 796.

[10] *Liji zhengyi*, 22: 197c, in *Shisanjing zhushu*, 1425.

[11] This discussion borrows from Chen 2007, 273.

[12] See Falkenhausen 1993.

[13] Chen 2007, 127–77.

鐘鼓喤喤	The bells and drums resound and ring,
磬筦將將	Stone chimes and flutes hum in harmony,
降福穰穰	Bringing down blessings in pride and plenty.

Unfortunately, the scores of ancient music have not been preserved. During the Han dynasty, concurrent to, and as a result of, the rise of the text-oriented *Shijing* exegesis, the use of the poems in rituals and other performances had more or less come to an end, and ultimately did so in the Western Jin dynasty (265–316). Hence, the oldest extant pieces of *Shijing* music provided by notations of twelve poems are not earlier than from the fourteenth century, although they possibly originate from the mid-Tang dynasty (first half of eighth cent.), more likely from the Northern Song (first half of eleventh cent.).[14]

Meter, Rhythm, Rhyme, Stanza

The editing of the poems at the Zhou Music Bureau probably explains why there was a relatively stable *Urtext*, available to be quoted and performed, and remarkably consistent in language and form.[15] The *Shijing* may have originated as a combination of regional dialects and different chronological layers of the Chinese language, but the compilation and editing would also have introduced an element of homogenization. This helps to explain why the received text does not display the linguistic and formal diversification one might expect, given the vast temporal and regional scales reflected in the anthology.

Each Chinese character is pronounced as one syllable, and the meter of a poem is determined by the number of characters per line. Although some *Shijing* poems do include lines varying widely in length, from just a single syllable (or character) to as many as eight, four-syllable lines are by far the most prominent. Extant sources, both transmitted and excavated, inform us that the "tetrasyllabic" style was a dominant genre from the beginning of Chinese poetic history through the fourth century BCE, first challenged by the *Chuci* poetic forms, and eventually supplanted by the pentasyllabic line in the third century CE According to one tabulation, 91% of the lines in the anthology are tetrasyllabic.[16] Of the remainder, moreover, the majority have five syllables, so the anthology is overwhelmingly dominated by tetrasyllabic lines and pentasyllabic exceptions. These lines of five syllables usually contain a grammatical particle, and it seems very plausible that these particles could have been unstressed in recitation or performance. Other variations from the tetrasyllabic meter are actually regular, in the sense that they are repeated in each stanza of the poem as a whole. This is the case for Mao 98, for instance, which comprises three stanzas, each having the rhythm 6-6-7, and thus illustrates the principle of symmetry among stanzas. Thus, we can see that the poems are mostly regular in meter, and nearly always follow the tetrasyllabic meter with some slight variations that were consistent with a regular rhythm.

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[14] Picken 1977.

[15] Certain scholars since the Song dynasty have hypothesized that the Urtext was compiled well before Confucius put his hands on it. See *Wenxian tongkao*, 178: 1541.

Within the tetrasyllabic line, we can further analyze the rhythm by reference to the caesura and rhythmic patterning. It is normal for a caesura to occur naturally, dividing the tetrasyllabic line into two halves. The first line of Mao 1 is exemplary: "*Guan-guan* / [cries] the osprey" 關關雎鳩. The reduplicated onomatopoeia of the osprey's cry occupies the former half of the line, while the disyllabic avian name occupies the latter half: speech and speaker in perfect balance. The tetrasyllabic line also allows for considerable rhythmic variation. Chinese characters are conventionally divided into two classes: *shizi* 實字, literally "substantive words," which carry specific meaning either individually or in compounds; and *xuzi* 虛字, literally "empty words," which have a primarily syntactical significance, functioning as an expression of acclamation, affirmation, negation, interrogation, etc. These can be termed "plerematic" and "cinematic" words in English.[17]

Whether or not the empty words were pronounced differently as a class, which is hard to know with certainty, they demand less emphasis than the substantive words. The rhythm of the poetic language is dominated by substantive words (hereafter represented by *S*). The empty words (hereafter *E*), consisting of prepositions, conjunctions and particles, cannot occur in isolation, and have to be subordinated to substantive words. The rhythmic foot movement of a four-word line in the *Shijing* poems can take one of the following patterns:

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[16] Kennedy 1939, 284. The discussion throughout this paragraph follows Kennedy's highly informative article.

[17] See Dobson 1968.

1.	*SS/ES*	(most frequently seen)
2.	*SS/SS*	(frequently seen)
3.	*ES/ES*	(frequently seen)
4.	*SE/SS*	(frequently seen)
5.	*SS/SE*	(less frequently seen)
6.	*ES/SS*	(less frequently seen)
7.	*SS/EE*	(occasionally seen)
8.	*SE/SE*	(occasionally seen)
9.	*EE/SS*	(occasionally seen)
10.	*ES/SE*	(occasionally seen)
11.	*EE/SE*	(occasionally seen)
12.	*SE/EE*	(rarely seen)
13.	*EE/ES*	(rarely seen)
14.	*SE/ES*	(rarely seen)

The remaining two possibilities (*EE/EE* and *ES/EE*) do not occur. Thus, the monotony of a tetrasyllabic line is greatly alleviated by rhythmic variation within the line, as determined by the placement of empty words relative to substantive ones. Careful examination of these rhythms can elucidate the musical patterning inherent in the *Shijing* text.

In addition to meter and rhythm, the *Shijing* poems are structured by end-rhyme, a fact of inestimable importance for their proper interpretation. In the first millennium BCE, end-rhyme as a regular, structuring feature of literary composition was extremely rare in world literature, perhaps even unique to China.[18] Thus, its role in the anthology deserves special attention here. Unfortunately, the rhyme structure of the *Shijing* is still not fully understood since the pronunciation of Old Chinese remains a contentious field.

Though end-rhyme is normal throughout the anthology, sometimes the rhyme occurs not on the final syllable, but rather on the penultimate one (when the final syllable is an empty one). The most common tendency is for poems to rhyme on even-numbered lines, with each stanza employing a different rhyme. But it is also common for the odd-numbered lines to rhyme, either with each other or with the even lines.

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[18] See T. V. F. Brogan's entry ''Rhyme,'' in Preminger et al. 1993, 1061–2, as well as the remarks in Williams 2011, 27–8.

Poems divided into four-line stanzas, which predominate in the anthology, typically have rhyme schemes such as *aaba*, *abab*, or *abcb*. The basic structure of end-rhyme on even lines may thus be supplemented by a secondary rhyme on the alternating lines, or by additional features such as assonance or internal rhyme.

The poem "Yanyan" 燕燕 (Mao 28) is typical of an "Air" in terms of meter, line, rhythm, rhyme and structure.[19] The reconstructed pronunciation of rhyme words below follows Baxter (1992). Note that the main vowel *ɨ is a high, back, unrounded vowel:[20]

SS/ES	燕燕于飛	*pjɨj	The mystic fowl fly past,
SS/SS	差池其羽	*w(r)jaʔ	With their wings unevenly displayed.
SS/ES	之子于歸	*k^{W}jɨj	The lady was going to be wed,
SS/ES	遠送于野	*ljaʔ	And I escorted her far into the country.
SS/SS	瞻望弗及	*g(r)jɨp	I looked till I could no longer see her,
SS/SS	泣涕如雨	*w(r)ja	And my tears poured out like rain.
SS/ES	燕燕于飛	*pjɨj	The mystic fowl fly past,
SE/SE	頡之頏之	*gang	Now up again, now down again.
SS/ES	之子于歸	*k^{W}jɨj	The lady was going to be wed,
ES/ES	遠于將之	*tsjang	And far off did I accompany her.
SS/SS	瞻望弗及	*g(r)jɨp	I looked till I could no longer see her,
SS/ES	佇立以泣	*khrjɨp	Long I stood still and weeping.
SS/ES	燕燕于飛	*pjɨj	The mystic fowl fly past,
SS/SS	下上其音	*ʔ(r)jɨm	Below and beyond I hear their cry.
SS/ES	之子于歸	*k^{W}jɨj	The lady was going to be wed,
SS/ES	遠送于南	*nɨm	And far off south did I escort her.
SS/SS	瞻望弗及	*g(r)jɨp	I looked till I could no longer see her,
SS/SS	實勞我心	*sjɨm	And felt grief deep in my heart.
SS/SE	仲氏任只	*njɨm	Alas for Lady Zhongshi Jen!
SS/SS	其心塞淵	*ʔ^{W}in	Truly fathomless was her feeling.

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[19] Chen 1999, 27. For the problem of the identification of the birds, see Chen 1999, 5 note 10: "mystic fowl" is a free rendering of *xuanniao* 玄鳥, apparently equiva-lent with *yanyan* here.

[20] See Baxter 1992, 181. In the most recent Baxter-Sagart reconstruction this vowel is represented simply as a schwa. See http://ocbaxtersagart.lsait.lsa.umich.edu/, accessed March 31, 2017.

ES/ES	終溫且**惠**	*_wes_	Both gentle was she and docile,[21]
SS/SS	淑慎其**身**	*_hljin_	Modest and proper in her person.
SS/ES	先君之**思**	*_sjɨ_	This longing for my former lord
ES/SS	以勗寡**人**	*_njin_	Has urged me on, the lonely one.

Characters that may belong to the rhyme are printed in bold. Note that in several cases the final character in a particular line is an empty word, and that the penultimate character is rhymed instead. The poem rhymes on even-numbered lines, but the odd lines generally seem to rhyme as well, though often these may be cross-rhymes between two phonologically similar, but not identical, vowel groups. Thus, we end up with a stanzaic rhyme scheme based on the form *ababab*, but with variations that could be represented *aba'ba''b*, where *a'* and *a''* are rhyme groups contiguous with *a*.

The formal structure of the *Shijing* poems may have been streamlined and perfected in the Mao recension. A good example of this phenomenon is a poem in the "Airs of Tang" entitled "Cricket" 蟋蟀 (Mao 114). The poem was attributed in the Mao preface to an anonymous poet who satirized Duke Xi 僖 of Jin (r. ninth cent. BCE) for his inappropriate frugality. However, in the recently discovered Tsinghua Bamboo Strips (TBS) dated to the fourth century BCE, we find an alternate version with some textual variants.[22] Here is the first stanza of the Mao version:[23]

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[21] Baxter does not include this line in the rhyme scheme, but elsewhere (Mao 191, 264) reconstructs *hui* 惠 as **wets*. In those cases, it rhymes solely with entering tone words. Wang Li places this word in the Zhi 脂 group, which has frequent rhyme contacts with Zhi 之, the rhyme group to which *si* 思 belongs. So, it is plausible that **wes-sjɨ*-惠思 is a secondary rhyme within this stanza.

[22] See Ji 2004, 52–3. The preface of the poem in the TBS text reads: "The duke of Zhou was holding a *jue* goblet and was yet to drink. A cricket came and fell into the Hall." Li Xueqin 李學勤 points out that this preface differs drastically from the thematic explanations of "Xishuai" preserved in the four extant schools of the *Shijing*, passed down from as early as the Han dynasty to modern days.

[23] The translation follows Arthur Waley's suggestion that the two halves of the stanza should be attributed to different speakers, that of the happy revelers and another admonishing them.

蟋蟀在堂	_*dang_	"The cricket is in the hall.
歲聿其莫	_*maks_	How the year moves on to its end!
今我不樂	_*g-rawk_	Though I am not happy today,
日月其除	_*lrjas_	The days and months pass away."
無已大康	_*khang_	"Do not surrender to pure pleasure!
職思其居	_*k(r)ja_	Your duty is to think of your abode.
好樂無荒	_*hmang_	Be fond of pleasure but without excess;
良士瞿瞿	_*g_^{w}_(r)jas_	For the fine gentlemen feels anxiety and fear."

The rhyme scheme is thus *abcbabab* (rhymes among certain syllables with the same main vowel *a* and acute or null codas are regular). The TBS version, by contrast, is less regular in terms of rhyming structure: *bbcbdbabab*. The textual variants of the TBS version of "Cricket," as well as its less regular structure, suggest that it might be another version different from any of the four schools transmitted from the Han. This hypothesis would suggest that this lineage of textual development may have been interrupted by the book burning of the Qin. From the time of the Tsinghua bamboo strips (305 BCE) to early Han, the subject and theme of the poem were reinterpreted to comport with Ruist values. Whatever the case, the contrast allows us to recognize anew the highly refined formal structure of the Mao recension. In the received text, the poems of the *Shijing* exemplify a euphonic balancing of meter, rhythm, and rhyme.

Above the level of the tetrasyllabic line, the poems exhibit complex structures and considerable regularity (in this respect, greater than that of Homeric epic). Most of the poems consist of several stanzas. Stanzaic structure is indicated to some extent by content and even line length, as in the case of Mao 98 mentioned above, but stanzas are demarcated primarily by the use of end-rhyme. In the "Airs" section, most of the stanzas are composed of four, six or eight lines. There are more expansive structures, though, the most extreme being Mao 154 "The Seventh Month", which consists of eight stanzas of eleven lines each. In the other divisions of the anthology, the numbers of lines in a stanza vary from four to more than ten, and are sometimes highly irregular, such as most of the poems in the *Zhousong* section, with only one stanza. A number of complex stanzaic forms occur among the longer pieces in the "Elegantiae," including the alternation of six- or eight-line stanzas (Mao 236), or the alternation of eight- and ten-line stanzas (Mao 245).[24] There are seven poems in the "Elegantiae" with the same rigid form of eight stanzas of eight lines each (Mao 193, 197, 254, 255, 259, 260, 299), which C. H. Wang has dubbed "strict octads."[25]

Two important features connecting lines and couplets are incremental repetition and anadiplosis. Incremental repetition is the device by which a line is repeated with only slight variation. For instance, the final stanza of Mao 82 reads:

知子之來之	Since I know that you are coming,
雜佩以贈之	I will give you jewelry.
知子之順之	Since I know who you adore,
雜佩以問之	I will comfort you with jewelry.
知子之好之	Since I know who you love,
雜佩以報之	I will requite you with jewelry.

Here the entire couplet is repeated with only slight variation in the penultimate position of each line. Anadiplosis is the repetition of a phrase at the end of one unit and the beginning of the following unit. For instance, in Mao 108/1:

彼其之子	That young officer:
美無度	So handsome but lacking restraint;
美無度	So handsome but lacking restraint,
殊異乎公路	He is utterly unlike those in charge of the roads.

In combination with regular end-rhyme, both these devices would naturally assist memorization and contribute to the overall coherence of a poem.

The most significant exception to the rule of tetrasyllabic meter and rhythm is the group of unrhymed poems in the "Zhou Hymns" section of the anthology. "Awesome Heaven Had Its Fixed Appointment" (Mao 271), probably one of the earliest creations in this section, diverges radically from the tetrasyllabic meter.[26] The following is the entire poem in its extant form:

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[24] See Mekada 1985, 153.

[25] Wang, C. H. 1974, 136–43.

[26] The Old Chinese readings of the final characters are given below according to Baxter's 1992 reconstructions. Although it is widely considered an unrhymed poem, note the assonance between *ming* 命 and *kang* 康, as well

昊天有成命	*_mrjing_	Awesome Heaven had its fixed appointment:
二后受之	*_tjɨ_	Two great lords (Wen and Wu) received it.
成王不敢康	*_khang_	King Cheng does not dare to dwell in happy idleness:
夙夜基命宥密	*_mrjit_	Morning and evening, he laid the foundation of his task, magnanimous and serene;
於緝熙	*_xjɨ_	Oh, continuously bright!
單厥心	*_sjɨm_)	He made generous his heart,
肆其靖之	*_tjɨ_	So that he could secure tranquility.

This poem has only one stanza with seven lines variegated in length from three words to six words, and the vowels of the ending feet of the seven lines vary drastically except the last line, which echoes the first. Given its free structure, it seems to belong to a genre distinct from the other *Shijing* poems, perhaps that of the liturgical prayer.

Language

The language of the *Shijing* is remarkably consistent, probably for reasons having to do with its compilation and transmission by court musicians, discussed above.[27] Nonetheless, some historical stages can be discerned in the anthology. It is generally accepted that the "Hymns of Zhou" contain some of the earliest pieces, while the "Elegantiae" include pieces from the Western Zhou, and the "Airs of the States" seem to include some of the latest works.[28]

Recently, there has been considerable debate about the extent to which the written text of the *Shijing* reflects the Old Chinese language of the Western Zhou dynasty. Some scholars have argued that the

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as the rhyme between *xi* 熙 and *zhi* 之. In other words, although the "Zhou Odes" depart from the formal structure of the *Shijing* as a whole, they do sometimes display their own phonic patterning worthy of note.

[27] For instance, "Two thirds of the total number of its poems have complete lines which they share in common with another poem or poems." Dobson 1968, 224.

[28] Dobson 1968, xxv has a precise periodization.

received *Shijing* is phonologically a "Zhou text in Han clothing,"[29] suspecting that the regular features of the received text were homogenized and standardized in the Han. But newly excavated texts, such as the *Odes* quotations preserved on the Guodian, Shanghai Museum, and Tsinghua University bamboo strips, suggest that both the excavated and transmitted texts are derived from a consistent literary tradition.

Formulas and Set Phrases

One prominent feature of poetic narration, as noted by many modern scholars, is the use of formulas and set phrases with recurrence in different sections of the anthology. C. H. Wang, for example, was inspired by the theory that Milman Parry and Albert B. Lord applied in the study of Homeric and Yugoslavian epics. He suggested that the formulaic expressions in the lines of poems from different sections, especially in the "Airs," reflect their origins in a folk tradition of spontaneous oral composition. For instance, Wang discusses the prevalence of lines beginning "This one" 之子.[30] This phrase occurs at the beginning of dozens of lines in the *Shijing*, and its occurrences can be classified into several formulas. First, there is the formula "This one is returning home" 之子于歸. This whole tetrasyllabic line occurs in five different poems (Mao 9/2, 3; Mao 12/1, 2, 3; Mao 6/1, 2, 3; Mao 28/1, 2, 3; Mao 156/4), and, moreover, is repeated within all but one of those poems. Then there are a number of substitutes for the final character to get expressions like "This one is going hunting" 之子于狩 (Mao 226/3), and another parallel set of negative expressions, like "This one has no robe" 之子無裳 (63/1). This kind of formulaic language is prevalent in the anthology.

On the other hand, the recurrence of set phrases and formulaic expressions in the poetic language does not provide a sufficient rationale to prove that the texts were improvisational or colloquial. Recent scholarship tends to emphasize the role of the Zhou court in shaping the *Shijing*. Without rejecting the role of folk tradition entirely, this view sees the language and style of the poems as primarily belonging to the central, *ya* 雅 tradition from the Zhou court.[31] A comparative examination of some formulaic expressions and structures, in both of the *Shijing* poems and bronze inscriptions, demonstrates that Chinese poetic tradition finds its roots in the eulogizing of clan founders in ceremonies conducted by clan leaders and practiced repeatedly over generations.

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[29] Baxter 1991, 30; for further discussion see Baxter 1992, 343–66. But see also Shaughnessy's 2015 critique of the role of oral tradition in shaping the *Shijing*.

[30] Wang, C. H. 1974, 51.

In the "Hymns" and "Elegantiae," formulaic phrases are frequently seen throughout the text and many of them are quoted and concurrently employed throughout the corpus of canonical texts and excavated documents. Some of them are even maintained in use nowadays. For example, the conventional tetrasyllabic phrase *wanshou wujiang* 萬壽無疆 ("everlasting life without limit") occurs not only in the "Airs of Bin" (Mao 157) and "Lesser Elegantiae" (Mao 166, 172, 209, 210, 211), but also in the bronze inscriptions of Western Zhou, the *Book of Documents*, and other ancient texts.[32] The formula also occurs in variants with trivial differences in wording, such as *wannian wujiang* 萬年無疆, *wanshou wuqi* 萬壽無期, *meishou wujiang* 眉壽無疆, *meishou wuqi* 眉壽無期, *meishou wannian* 眉壽萬年, etc. A chronological analysis of the bronze inscriptions of Western Zhou reveals that these four-syllable idiomatic expressions were produced in Mid-Western Zhou, and mostly combined from a number of two-syllable words of prayers generated in an earlier time.[33] In other words, apart from their oral derivation, many of the set phrases and formulaic expressions in the poems, especially in the sections of "Elegantiae" and "Hymns," are derived from sacrificial prayers and ritual activities of the noble class.

bi *and* xing

Apart from the formulaic phrases, the poetic language of the *Shijing* also exhibits rhetorical devices roughly parallel to Western metaphors. Ever since its compilation, the rhetorical devices of exposition (*fu* 賦), analogy (*bi* 比), and stimulus (*xing* 興) have been the three principal ones of the six arts of *Shijing*.[34] Song-dynasty scholars then analyzed the use of *fu*, *bi*, and *xing* in individual poems, but it is not clear if they were understood in the same way in the Han. These three notions, especially *xing*, have attracted great attention and vehement disputes among modern scholars throughout the world, not only because of their obvious importance in the Mao commentary, but also because of their significance in the later Chinese poetic tradition.[35]

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[31] For the development of the concept of *ya*, see Chen 2007, 253–7.

[32] It is curious to note that it remained in use through the twentieth century, being privileged for use with respect to the monarch in imperial China and for Chairman Mao in the 1960s and 1970s.

[33] Chen 2010a, 44–6.

What has bewildered later exegetes most about *bi* and *xing* are the similarities and distinctions between them.[36] While *bi* looks similar to the Western simile, the imagistic practice of *xing* in *Shijing* poems is the juxtaposition of two elements related in some unspecified way. The *bi* or *xing* images are usually birds, animals, plants, or occasionally a man-made object. They are placed in the opening lines of a stanza, in some unspecified way pertaining to the theme of a poem. Mao 28, for example, opens with an image of flying birds and, in this indirect way, introduces the recipients to the elements of the poetic theme and situation. Mao 1 opens with the osprey's call, somehow introducing the epithalamion that follows. These sorts of *xing* images are ubiquitous in the "Airs," and seem to play a profound role in creating the musical effect of the poems. Moreover, they interact with the formal properties of the poems in a complex way as, for instance, when a *xing* image is repeated at the beginning of each stanza. Overall the practice of *bi-xing* is one of the most distinctive literary devices in early Chinese texts, and continues to be highly productive throughout the later tradition. Yet, the allegorical dimension of the poems has also challenged readers and scholars, since it so often seems to imply a second level of meaning below the surface of the text. In practice, the reference of the

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[34] Traditional analysis of these modes has followed the six principles identified in the *Zhouli*: *feng, fu, bi, xing, ya,* and *song*. The original sense of all these terms probably had more to do with musical performance than content. The first, fifth, and sixth (*feng*, *ya*, *song*) of these are actually the names of the three principle divisions of the anthology, while the second, third, and fourth (*fu*, *bi*, *xing*) came to be understood as literary devices governing individual poems.

[35] See Yu 1987, which makes an ambitious case for the singularity of *bi-xing* poetics in relation to Western literary thought.

[36] Wang Anshi 王安石 (1021–1086) was probably the first person who points out the distinction between these two groups in his *Zhouguan xinyi* 周官新義 (A new interpretation of the *Zhouli*).

xing image can be highly malleable and vary according to different interpreters, which is precisely why the guidance of the Mao commentary has been so central to *Shijing* exegesis. To analyze the content of the poems, it may be more useful to consider the structural principles of the anthology as a whole.

II. The Structure of the Anthology

The *Shijing* anthology as a whole presents us with a highly varied repertoire of songs on disparate themes. It seems that from as early as the Spring and Autumn era, the poems were performed in suites. There is a good example of the performance of the *Shijing* in a famous historical episode in which Jizha 季札, a prince from the state of Wu, presented betrothal gifts to the state of Lu in 544 BCE. The court musicians of Lu played all parts of the *Shijing* sections in front of him as standard ritual music of Zhou. Nevertheless, the citing of all the names of the subsections of the *Shijing* does not necessarily indicate a performance of the entire repertory of songs.[37] A reasonable speculation is that the musicians of Lu selected a representative portion of songs from each subsection and presented them to Jizha. In any case, the episode illustrates how the *Shijing* was a repertoire of songs that complemented one another, and could be performed together to create more extended compositions. Though this sort of compositional approach differs from the macroscopic unity of Homeric epic, it bears a greater resemblance to the performance of the bard Demodocus described in the *Odyssey*, combining various songs on historical and mythological themes.

Before its canonization in the second century BCE, the anthology was already mentioned frequently in classical documents.[38] These poetic quotations are sometimes identified simply as *Shi*, but also sometimes as *Zhoushi* 周詩 (poems of Zhou), *Shisanbai* 詩三百 (three hundred poems), *Ya* 雅 (Elegantiae), *Song* 頌, or specifically *Zhousong*

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[37] Picken 1977, 90.

[38] For instance, 127 times in the *Zuozhuan* 左傳, which is believed to have been compiled no later than the fourth century BCE. In other contemporaneous literature, lines or stanzas from the poems in this anthology are also quoted frequently: 21 times in *Guoyu* 國語, 10 times in *Lunyu* 論語, and 8 times in *Mozi* 墨子.

周頌 (Hymns of Zhou), *Lusong* 魯頌 (Hymns of Lu), *Shangsong* 商頌 (Hymns of Shang), *Daya* 大雅 (Greater Elegantiae) or *Xiaoya* 小雅 (Lesser Elegantiae). These last designations may suggest that these poems were considered odes from the court of Zhou. Some of the poems were actually collected from feudal courts, and were grouped into the *Feng* 風 (Airs) sections in later editions. The use of these terms suggests that the major divisions in the anthology as we have it today have a sound historical basis in the earlier application of the songs.

The Macro-Structure of the Anthology

The received text of the *Shijing* consists of 305 poems divided into three major sections, namely *Feng* 風 (Airs) or *Guofeng* 國風 (Airs of the States), *Ya* 雅 (Elegantiae), and *Song* 頌 (Hymns).[39] The first section, *Feng*, is composed of fifteen subsections arranged according to names of states or other place names.[40] Apart from the first two subsections, the other thirteen sectional names are all composed of "Place or State name + *air.*" The characters *nan* 南 (South) and *feng* 風 (Air) may indicate that the first two subsections are distinct from the thirteen "Airs" preceded by state or regional names, though they all belong in the "Airs." The second section, *Ya*, is divided into the *Daya* 大雅 [Greater Elegantiae] and *Xiaoya* 小雅 [Lesser Elegantiae]. These tend to be more solemn poems transmitting foundational legends of the Zhou dynasty. The third section, *Song*, contains three subdivisions: *Zhousong* 周頌 [Hymns of Zhou], *Lusong* 魯頌 [Hymns of Lu], and *Shangsong* 商頌 [Hymns of Shang].

For the convenience of the reader, the following table illustrates the organization of the anthology as a whole. Numbers in parentheses indicate the number of individual poems within each division:

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[39] Alternatively, *bangfeng* 邦風, *xia* 夏, and *song* 訟 are the divisions given in *Kongzi shilun* 孔子詩論, a newly discovered Warring States text. These are all either synonymous or phonologically similar to the names in the transmitted text.

[40] In the Shanghai Museum Bamboo-strip writings, the so-called "Guofeng" was written "Bang feng" 邦風 (Ma Chengyuan 2001, 129). It is highly likely that *guo* replaced *bang* in order to avoid the mention of the name of Liu Bang 劉邦 (r. 206–195 BCE), the first emperor of Han.

Section names			Sequential number of the poems as in Mao edition
Airs of the States (160)	South (Nan) (25)	South of Zhou (11)	#1–11
		South of Shou (14)	#12–25
	Airs of Individual States (135)	Airs of Bei (19)	#26–44
		Airs of Yong (10)	#45–54
		Airs of Wei (10)	#55–64
		Airs of the Royal Domain (10)	#65–74
		Airs of Zheng (21)	#75–95
		Airs of Qi (11)	#96–106
		Airs of Wey (7)	#107–113
		Airs of Tang (12)	#114–125
		Airs of Qin (10)	#126–135
		Airs of Chen (8)	#136–143
		Airs of Gui (Kuai) (6)	#144–149
		Airs of Cao (4)	#150–153
		Airs of Bin (7)	#154–160
Elegantiae (105)	The Lesser Elegantiae (74)		#161–234
	The Greater Elegantiae (31)		#235–265
Hymns (40)	The Hymns of Zhou (31)		#266–296
	The Hymns of Lu (4)		#297–300
	The Hymns of Shang (5)		#301–305

The remainder of this section will consider each of the three primary divisions: Airs, Elegantiae, and Hymns and their internal arrangement.

The Micro-Structure of the Anthology

Airs (Feng)

The "Airs of the States" are not actually organized around the names of states so much as various regions, only some of which were feudal states. For instance, the Bei, Yong, and Wei airs represent three regions (all located in the northeast of modern Henan province), all of which were later subsumed into the state of Wei.[41]

One enduring scholarly crux is the identification of the first two sections, the *Zhounan* and *Shaonan*. Here *nan,* "south," may initially have been used to refer to a type of musical instrument prevalent in the middle and lower Yangtze River valley. The content of the poems in the *Zhounan* and *Shaonan* in the "Airs" is not strikingly different from that of other poems in the "Airs." They do have some features of geographical significance, however, such as river names,[42] and dialectal features.[43] The poems of these two sections may have been collected from a number of principalities located along the basins of these river valleys, the so-called Southern states, mostly enfeoffed by the Duke of Zhou and Duke of Shao to their kin, immediately after their conquest against the Shang loyalists in these areas.[44] Having little to do with martial topics, these two subsections preserve the voices of the southern elites of the Zhou, with the subjects varying from love (Mao 1, 9, 10), courtship (Mao 14, 20, 23), weddings (Mao 6, 12, 24), hunting (Mao 7, 11, 25), and songs pertaining to court life (Mao 2, 18), sacrifice (Mao 4, 5, 15), and civil service (Mao 3, 13, 21).

The themes of the "Airs" vary broadly, including political satires, grievances at waning life, eulogies to gallant warriors, accounts of historical events, depictions of nature, voices of craftsmen, and songs about love and marriage. It is worth noting that the name of this section is homophonous with the word *feng* 諷 meaning "satire" or "political criticism." In pre-modern times, the "Airs" were never understood as innocent folk songs, but were invested with definite political implications.

Elegantiae (Ya)

The Elegantiae section contains 105 poems from Zong-Zhou 宗周, the area under the direct dominion of the Zhou House. *Ya* itself was in Old Chinese a loan character for *Xia* 夏, an ancient name for the Zhou people and later for the whole Chinese realm. Thus, this section has a central importance for the anthology and touches on key mythical and historical subjects. The poems “King Wen” (Mao 235 “Wenwang”), “Greater Brightness” (Mao 236 “Daming”), and “Spreading” (Mao 237 “Mian”) in the “Greater Elegantiae” were believed to be early Zhou creations. However, the style of these poems, relatively consistent as they appear, including rhyming vowels, formulaic expressions, and metric schemes, suggests that they were highly likely later creations, between late Western Zhou (ninth–eighth centuries BCE) and early Spring and Autumn (eighth–seventh centuries BCE).[45] The poems of latest composition in the “Elegantiae” section would be certain pieces in the “Lesser Elegantiae,” such as “First Month” (Mao 192 “Zhengyue”), “Rain of Unrighteousness” (Mao 194 “Yu wu zheng”), and “Alignment in the Tenth Month” (Mao 193 “Shiyue zhi jiao”).

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[41] Chen Zhi 2007, 294–9.

[42] Ibid., 227–9.

[43] Ibid., 229–32.

[44] Located approximately in modern Hubei, Hunan, and Anhui Provinces.

The themes of the “Lesser Elegantiae” range from political satire to praise for successful military expeditions and historical figures. Songs were also collected from the areas surrounding Zong-Zhou and presented as being suitable for singing in the *ya* music, for example, “The Deer Cry” (Mao 161 “Lu ming”), “Four Steeds” (Mao 162 “Si mu”), “Bright Are the Flowers” (Mao 163 “Huang huang zhe hua”) and “Fish in the Trap” (Mao 170 “Yu li”), and other pieces are recorded in the classics of Zhou etiquette as often sung at grand archery, feasting, and drinking of the feudal lords, as well as in the meeting of the two lords and other ceremonies in the fiefs of grand masters and scholars.[46] Most of the poems in the “Greater Elegantiae” section are more related to the daily activities in the court, such as music playing (Mao 242), feasting (Mao 246), drinking (Mao 246, 247, 248, 251), archery (Mao 246) and palace building (Mao 242).

In the extant Mao edition of *Shijing*, the poems in the “Elegantiae” and “Hymns of Zhou” are divided into subdivisions of ten poems each, such as the “decade of ‘Wen wang.’” According to Li Shan 李善 (630–689), the great commentator of the *Wen xuan* anthology, “The reason that the Mao edition of *Shijing* has ‘decade of Luming,’ etc., is because every ten pieces composes one fascicle and thus are named a ‘decade.’”[47] Lu Deming’s 陸德明 (ca. 550–630) *Jingdian shiwen* 經典釋文 also refers to the decade of certain sections, so the subdivision of “Elegantiae” into decades existed at least since the early Tang dynasty.

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[45] Chen 2010b.

[46] Wang Guowei 1981a.

[47] *Wen xuan*, 50.2217.

Hymns (Song)

The worship of ghosts and deities identifiable with deceased kings and ancestors was a prominent feature of the Shang and Zhou religion. The poems included in the *Song* section of the *Shijing* contain the appellations of the ancestors of the composers, concrete depictions of sacrificial ceremonies, and frequently used terms in liturgical prayers, all of which indicate that they were initially odes sung as part of sacrificial rites serving the ancestral cult of the Shang and Zhou rulers. Among the three subsections, the "Hymns of Zhou" are likely the earliest compositions, dating from the time of the dynastic transition between Shang and Zhou (eleventh century BCE) to late Western Zhou (eighth century BCE), judging from linguistic features, such as irregularity in length of the poetic lines from 2 to 7 syllables, random metrical patterns, and varieties of rhyming phenomena. The contents of these 31 poems, passed down from remote antiquity, are not fully comprehensible to scholars.

"Hymns of Lu" preserves four lengthy poems from the State of Lu, unanimously ascribed to Duke Xi of Lu, a lord enthroned in early Spring and Autumn, who strengthened Lu and annexed a number of neighboring states. The five poems of "Hymns of Shang" display a certain similarity to the historical narratives in the "Greater Elegantiae", but the difference is that the former are offered in commemoration of the ancient kings and heroes of Shang.

Structural Principles: Ellipsis, Bipolarity, Unity

Though the poems in the *Shijing* are highly diverse and manifold, there also seem to be some underlying principles that unite them. Confucius already proposed that "One can sum up the three hundred *Songs* in just one phrase, namely: to have no deformation in one's thoughts."[48] Though the meaning of this sentence has been contested, a few more concrete structural principles remain visible to the modern reader. These complement each other to create a sense of coherence in the anthology as a whole. First, there is the avoidance or ellipsis of certain heroic themes, which are only celebrated in a partial or suggestive manner. Second, there is moral bipolarity, in which poems affirming certain values are complemented by other poems opposing or qualify-ing those values. Third, there is the unity of the musical suite, with various poems joined together not by any single feature but through a more elusive sense of balance and order.

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[48] *Analects*, 2.2.

Ellipsis of Epic

Aristotle famously said that tragedy is the imitation of "an action that is serious and complete."[49] No poem in the *Shijing* gives a depiction of a complete action. On the contrary, one of the definitive features of *Shijing* narrative is a kind of ellipsis of the central action.[50] The *Songs* do not need to describe historical events or situations in full; rather they evoke only a part of the whole, from which the sophisticated reader can reconstruct the entire meaning.

Along these lines, C. H. Wang pointed out that a number of poems in the "Greater Elegantiae" together constitute a kind of epic of King Wen, the "Weniad."[51] In the extant *Shijing*, there are a small percentage of the poems in the anthology, usually lengthy pieces scattered in different sections, that celebrate the meritorious deeds of ancestral kings, such as "Birth to the People" (Mao 245 "Sheng min"), "The Closed Temple" (Mao 300 "Bi gong"), or "Mighty Yin" (Mao 305 "Yin wu"). These poems demonstrate a shared theme appropriate to singing the virtue and meritorious deeds of ancestor kings, as well as later kings and noblemen of celebrity. In the first decade of poems, the "Greater Elegantiae," eight of the songs extol the virtue and deeds of King Wen, the other two his successor King Wu. In the "Greater Elegantiae", other ancestors of Zhou, such as Hou Ji (Mao 245), Duke Liu (Mao 250), Gugong Danfu (Mao 237), and Wang Ji (Mao 241) are celebrated and commemorated. Like Homeric epic, these are narrative poems eulogizing ancestors, heroic deeds and other important events of critical importance to the culture. On the other hand, these *Shijing* poems on historical themes lack concrete depiction of the settings, dialogues, and detailed recitation of the plots of a complete story.

To take "King Wen" (Mao 235), for example, the first three stanzas of the poem read:[52]

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[49] *Poetics* 1449b.

[50] See "Heroism," in Wang, C. H. 1995, 53–72.

[51] See "Epic," in Wang, C. H. 1995, 73–114.

[52] The translation follows the interpretations of Karlgren 1950, 185–6.

文王在上	**djangʔ*	King Wen is on high,
於昭于天	**hlin*	Ah, resplendent there in Heaven.
周雖舊邦	**prong*	Though Zhou is an old state,
其命維新	**sjin*	Its charge now is a new one.

有周不顯	**xenʔ*	The house of Zhou is splendid indeed;
帝命不時	**djɨ*	Was not the charge of the Lord a timely one?
文王陟降	**kruŋs*	King Wen ascends and descends,
在帝左右	**wjɨʔ*	On the left and right sides of the Lord.

亹亹文王	**wjang*	Quick and strong was King Wen,
令聞不已	**ljɨʔ*	His fair repute can never end.
陳錫哉周	**tjiw*	Amply endowed, indeed, was Zhou;
侯文王孫子	**tsjɨʔ*	There were the grandsons and sons of King Wen.

The theme of the entire poem focuses on how the heavenly mandate was transferred from the hands of Shang to those of King Wen, owing to his supreme virtue and illustrious reputation. The whole poem is divided into 14 quatrains, with four tetrasyllabic lines in each stanza. Each stanza follows a regular *abcb* rhyme scheme.

In spite of the diversity of the contents of the *Shijing*, these poems on King Wen and the Zhou founding clearly play a central role. But, in fact, the *Shijing* is *not* organized in such a way; instead, the poems on these themes are distributed throughout the "Greater Elegantiae," with various other occasional or ritual poems intervening. The ethical and aesthetic principles underlying the *Shijing*, then, are not associated with a particular action or a single hero, but rather are meant to be found more adventitiously, underlying the poems implicitly. The "Airs of the States" themselves treat the royal domain of Zhou as preeminent among equals, with the two *Nan* sections that open the "Airs" both representing the elite culture of states subordinate to Zhou.[53] The tripartite structure of the anthology leads from the various subordinate states back to the central Zhou court. According to the structure of the anthology as a whole, heroic themes are subordinated to a broader perspective that encompasses large swathes of Chinese society and history.

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[53] Chen Zhi finds that they represent two regions enfeoffed soon after the Zhou conquest, and associated more closely with the Zhou elite than the other states. See Chen 2007, 220–42.

Bipolarity of Zheng and Bian

Moreover, many poems in the anthology deviate substantially from heroic ideals or court solemnity. Traditional scholars have distinguished within both the "Airs" and the "Elegantiae" between two subordinate types, the "proper" and "deviant" works (*zheng* 正 and *bian* 變). Already the Mao preface explains that these deviant poems arise in the decadent age when the political order has deteriorated and the ways of the founding kings have been forgotten.[54] According to Zheng Xuan 鄭玄 (127–200), the proper elements in the anthology are the first two sections of the "Airs" (the *Zhounan* and *Shaonan*, Mao 1–24), the decade of "The Deer Cry," and part of the succeeding decade (Mao 161–76) in the "Lesser Elegantiae," and the decade of "King Wen" and part of the succeeding decade (Mao 235–52) in the "Greater Elegantiae."[55] These Proper Odes are then dated back to the early Western Zhou, the heroic age under the splendid reigns of Kings Wu and Cheng. The later poems in the anthology, though, date to the end of the Western Zhou, when Kings Xuan and You failed to maintain the high principles of the founders. According to this theory (which may have been a later imposition), both the "Airs" and the "Elegantiae" follow a chronological ordering, with the early poems representing early Western Zhou and the later, more decadent pieces representing its decline.

In the "Airs," the poems collected from the states of Zheng and Wei contain verses that deviated from the ritual orthodoxy of the Zhou, and seem improper beside the songs from the "Elegantiae" and "Hymn" sections. The content of the other "Airs" varies widely, and it is not clear whether Zheng Xuan would have treated them as deviant also. The most striking feature of the Zheng and Wei subsections is the theme of courtship and the lovers' rendezvous. Zhu Xi, in his edition of the poems, marks 15 of the 21 poems in the "Airs of Zheng" as *yinshi* 淫詩 "lascivious songs." In the voices of country folk and lower class people, including some literati of lower status, these poems may bear more features of folk literature than those of other divisions. Whatever the original reason for the inclusion of these poems in the anthology, in the received text, they complement more formal or orthodox pieces, increasing the diversity and amplitude of the "Airs."

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[54] Wang, C. H. 1995, 116.

[55] See "Shi pu xu" 詩譜序, in *Mao shi zhengyi*, 2, in *Shisanjing zhushu*, 262. It is ambiguous whether these are the only Proper Odes or not, since Zheng concludes with "their ilk" (*zhi shu* 之屬).

A similar phenomenon occurs in the "Elegantiae" section, which is also said to have its "Proper Elegantiae" and "Deviant Elegantiae." The "Greater Elegantiae" starts with a number of hymns sung to appraise the accomplishments of the founding heroes of the Zhou clan. The arrangement of these poems suggests a thematic progression, opening with the works traditionally labeled as the "Proper Elegantiae." The poems between "King Wen" (Mao 235) to "Nook in the Hillside" (Mao 252) are mostly poems lauding the early accomplishments of the Zhou (Mao 235, 237, 244, 250), the glory and success of the royal family (Mao 240, 241), legendary origins of the Zhou clan (Mao 235, 237, 245), the Heavenly mandate (Mao 235, 237, 241, 243), palace construction (Mao 242), splendid weddings (Mao 236, 240), victories in military history (Mao 238, 244), and grand feasting and archery (Mao 246, 247, 248, 249, 251). In contrast to these, the poems from "The People Exhausted" (Mao 253) to "Shao is Foreboding" (Mao 265) contain complaints about war or natural disaster (Mao 258, 265), criticism of improper administration (Mao 253, 254), and bitter remonstrations over the waning of Zhou (Mao 255, 256, 257, 264). These poems were categorized as "Deviant Elegantiae" by Mao Heng in the Greater Preface.

Though the "deviant" poems occupy only a small percentage of the anthology as a whole, they play a role in its overall structure by complementing the more orthodox and laudatory works. This dual role is suggested by the term *feng* itself, which refers both to the popular "Airs" and also to political criticism (*feng* 諷). This bipolarity is a structural principle of the anthology as a whole, with positive and negative models for praise and blame complementing one another.

Macropoetic Unity

If the anthology is not organized around a linear progression, a single hero, a historical event, or any one theme, does it possess any larger coherence? Clues to this hitherto unresolved question may lie in the historical origins of the anthology. As we have seen, in 544 BCE, the poems were performed as a grand suite including each of the major divisions. It seems that some were already performed even earlier at ceremonial occasions at the Zhou court, then also in various configurations accompanied by dance and music. Considering the anthology along these lines, we might look for traces of these musical suites throughout the anthology. Though such results can only be tentative given our limited knowledge, they offer the hope of understanding the anthology in a more sophisticated fashion than through the historical speculation that has occupied so many of its interpreters, i.e. by reading the larger rhetorical structures of theme and variation that frame the individual songs. As Nienhauser has written,

> . . . it has been argued that there may originally have been some significance to the sequence of these three-hundred-plus poems. Whether such a significance existed or can be seen in the extant text is difficult to determine. Yet it is clear that reading one poem in the context of another, often contiguous text proves useful.[56]

To test the validity of this proposition one might consider, for instance, the opening of the "Lesser Elegantiae," which contains a number of formal pieces for celebration at court. For instance, Mao 161, "The Deer Cry," is a convivial ode celebrating the arrival of a guest. The succeeding poem, "Four Steeds" (Mao 162), is in the voice of an official traveling on duty away from his lord and longing to return home. Mao 163 ("Bright Are the Flowers") is parallel to 162, also presenting the case of a messenger traveling to another state by means of equine imagery. So Mao 162 and 163 take us away from home, as is implicit in the arrival of a guest in Mao 161. "Flowering Kerria" (Mao 164 "Chang di"), in a variation on the theme of family ties alluded to in Mao 162, celebrates the importance of brotherly love. With "Chopping Wood" (Mao 165 "Fa mu"), though, we find ourselves again in a festive setting parallel to that of Mao 161: the poem celebrates family and friends reunited, and concludes with a riotous celebration: "Whenever we have leisure, / Let us drink the sparkling spirits."[57] The effect of this sequence of five poems is something like the sonata form, opening in one key but then modulating to another, and finally recapitulating the original theme for a harmonious conclusion. This tentative analysis is merely a sketch; the extent to which this kind of structure pertains throughout the anthology is uncertain. Traditional Chinese scholarship mostly followed the precedent of the Mao commentary in focusing on exegesis of individual poems, rather than evaluating suites of poems together. Meanwhile, the tendency of modern Western scholarship has been to ignore the traditional arrangement and interpretations, as in Waley's rearrangement of the anthology for his *Book of Songs*. Thus, the harmony implicit in the *Shijing*'s sequence and structure awaits further research.

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[56] Nienhauser 2008, 14.

[57] Here we follow the translation in Legge 1871, 255.

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3

COMPARING FORM AND STRUCTURE IN HOMER AND THE *SHIJING*

ZHANG Wei (Shanghai)

Epic poetry vs. *shi*-poetry

The purpose of this comparison is to explore the following question: how do the two Homeric epics and the *Shijing* deploy formal elements and structural principles in different ways to achieve different "poetic effect" and "poetic unity", and what are the cultural premises that may account for their differences? The main reason for asking the question is that we approach these texts as cultural foundation texts. We are interested especially in their roles as the fountainhead of poetic thought in the West and in China, respectively, and in the ways in which this fountainhead is drawn upon by later traditions of poetic thought, notably that of philosophical poetics.

Discussions of form and structure seem to be inextricably bound to the notion of "genre", since it is often assumed that a particular "genre" determines the form and often the structure in which a poem is cast. Hence, the differences in form and structure of a poem should mirror the differences that are inherent in the different genres. Mutschler and Schmidt start with the observation that "the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* are epic poems, i.e. long narratives in poetic form" (230) and contrast this with the *Shijing*, which "is a collection of ca. 300 relatively short poems." (230, n.3) This could bring to mind the usual distinction between the two genres of "epic" and "lyric", with Homer and the *Shijing* exemplifying each genre and becoming the "foundation genre" of each tradition. However, going back to the foundation texts of these poetic traditions to put them into comparison, we are reluctant to impose the "genres" based on the Western (and ultimately Greek) tradition of narrative (epic), drama and lyric cross-culturally on Chinese poetry, so as

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to avoid distorting what is indigenous. It seems more desirable to first make an effort to look at each text itself, to see how it understands the type of poetry it itself embodies.

In the case of the Homeric epics, we may rely on Homer's depictions of song (*aoidê*), of singers (*aoidoi*) and their craft. A great variety of songs are presented in the two epics, including marriage-songs, harvest-songs, and songs performed at festivals, feasts or funerals, but all these types of songs are taken into the vast compass of one special type of song, heroic epic. The Homeric singer of tales (i.e. the master epic poet) takes all forms of song under his purview, including the songs of the other "singers of tales" within the epic, such as Phemius and Demodocus. These traditional *aoidoi* usually perform at the feast of nobles, and an essential function of their song is to confer glory (*kleos*). In the words of Penelope, Phemios knows "the deeds of men and gods, on which the singers confer glory" (ἔργ᾽ ἀνδρῶν τε θεῶν τε, τά τε κλείουσιν ἀοιδοί).[1] This phrase most succinctly encapsulates the nature and function of heroic song within Homeric poetry and may be taken to define Homeric poetry itself: it sings of "the deeds of heroes and gods", and in singing it perpetuates their glory (*kleos*).[2] With regard to the relation between Homeric (epic) poetry and other forms of song, it is worth emphasizing that the narrative mode takes precedence over all other kinds of song.

The *Shijing* has few descriptions of such a nature, nor does it refer to itself in a similar way, making it difficult for us to access its self-understanding.[3] But we may approach from a different angle, by probing into the origin of the forms of poetry contained in the title of the anthology, namely *shi*. Considering the fact that diverse categories of poems are collected, including marriage-poems, banquet-poems, harvest poems, ritual poems, etc, what indeed marks them all as *shi*? One theory, most cogently formulated by the modern literary scholar Wen Yiduo (1899-1946) in an influential paper entitled "Ge yu shi", suggests that the *Shijing* has two origins in its composition, namely, *ge*

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[1] *Od*. 1.338.

[2] Cf. *Il*. 9.189 where Achilles sings of "klea andrôn"; and Hesiod, *Theogony* 100, where the singer, as servant of the Muses, sings of "klea proterôn anthrôpôn".

[3] There are a number of self-references in the *Shijing*, commenting on the occasion of the song, but they mostly concern the function of poetic performance, building on the bipolarity of praise and blame.

(歌; roughly, lyric song) and *shi* (詩; roughly, narrative poem).[4] The former was rhythmically adapted to the spontaneous expression of emotions, while the latter functioned as the narrative vehicle for historical information, and was a proto-form of historiography before the rise of prose. Later, the purely archival function of recording historical events split from *shi*, and what remained of it merged with *ge* to crystallize as the *shi*-poetry in the collection of the *Shijing* anthology. Thus, many shi-poems in the anthology display this dual origin and fulfill a dual function.[5] This theory draws our attention to the crucial fact that, unlike in the Homeric epics, the narrative mode in *shi*-poetry is accommodated to the lyric expressions of emotions, and this fact seems to characterize the diverse poems in the anthology as *shi*.

What cultural (rather than generic) premises underlie these different conceptions of "poetry" as epic poetry and *shi*-poetry? A comparison of the different formal elements and structural principles deployed by the two foundation texts may shed some light on the question. In order to facilitate our comparison, we focus on the two aspects of poetic effect and poetic unity, each conveyed by their different formal elements and structural principles. Our comparison is based on a close reading of the two preceding papers, putting them side by side to draw out their implications. We pay special attention to two factors of their analysis: first, the distinctive or unique features of Homer and *Shijing*; second, since the Homeric epics are two in number, while the *Shijing* has three divisions, the choices made to favor the one over the other(s) and to use it as a paradigm. Both factors can be indicative of cultural premises in the search for poetic effect and unity.

Formal elements: the search for "poetic effect"

It must be pointed out at the outset that we follow the lead of Mutschler and Schmidt and Chen and Williams in taking Homer and the *Shijing* as designating the received texts, that is, the texts transmitted in a fixed shape that we have today: the 24 songs of the *Iliad* and the same of the *Odyssey*, and the Mao recension of the *Shijing*.[6] With this

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[4] However, on the level of the text, the two terms "ge" and "shi", along with a few others such as "yao" and "song", seem to be used interchangeably.

[5] Wen Yiduo 2006, 148-57; cf. Nylan 2001, 77-8.

[6] Mutschler and Schmidt, 229; Chen and Williams, 256.

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common basis, both papers divide the discussion of formal elements into similar categories. Mutschler and Schmidt start with the metrical form of epic poetry, the dactylic hexameter and its distinct rhythm. It is a long verse adjustable to many variations within the line, but overall it creates the steadiness and stateliness appropriate for its heroic subject, so it subsequently became the standard meter for heroic epic throughout antiquity. It is even believed to be the ideal vehicle for epic narrative. Next, on the level of narrative construction, the Homeric epics employ the well-known techniques of oral composition, including formulas, set phrases and type scenes. Persons, things, events, and scenes are described in metrically fixed patterns or in analogous terms, and thus give a sense of regularity and stableness. A similar expressive function is found in the Homeric language, which is a *Kunstsprache*, working on a higher, more stately register than ordinary spoken language. It therefore acquires a Panhellenic character, facilitating the Homeric epics becoming cultural foundation texts. Then, on the level of modes of expression, two features stand out. First, Homer's use of imagery, especially extended similes, has the function of illustrating not only the external appearance of an object or a person, but also more often the emotions of characters. Second, the most striking formal element in Homer is no doubt its pervasive use of direct speech. Besides the high proportion of speeches in comparison with narrative, one remarkable fact is that all types of speeches are included. Different mental and emotional processes of the characters are represented from their own perspectives, thus exerting a "dramatic effect" on the audience.

Mutschler and Schmidt's analysis attempts to negotiate between the technical functions of these formal elements and their aesthetic effect, leading to the conclusion that "Homer had at his disposal a set of formal elements which was well suited for the creation of highly powerful narratives." (240) Formal elements are not mere technical devices for the skillful composition of poetry, but combine and reinforce each other to create a range of aesthetic effects, foremost among which is the dramatic effect on emotions. When we compare Homer with the other epics of the time, all the formal elements discussed may have been shared, the only exception being Homer's pervasive use of direct speech (the case of extended similes is contested). Mutschler and Schmidt quote a passage in chap. 24 of Aristotle's *Poetics* as evidence, where the philosopher singles out in admiration direct speech as a distinctive feature of Homer. Aristotle is less forthcoming in comparing the two Homeric epics with each other in this regard, but simply takes Homer to be the greatest predecessor of the tragic poets. Mutschler and Schmidt point out correctly that this assessment is based more on the *Iliad* than the *Odyssey*, since the former resembles tragedy and creates a tragic effect, while the latter resembles the novel and creates a mixed effect, often leaning toward the comic.[7] Hence, to draw out the logical conclusion of Aristotle's argument, the *Iliad* is to be favored over the *Odyssey*, as the paradigmatic epic for creating the dramatic effect of tragedy.

Chen and Williams' discussion of the formal elements in the *Shijing* employs more or less the same categories, but very different ways of creating different poetic effects come into view. The *shi*-poems use mostly the dominant meter of the age, the tetrasyllabic meter, with rhythmic variations within [illegible] line. But it is notably structured by end-rhyme, a very rare phenomenon in world literature at the time, "perhaps even unique to China", as the two authors claim (261). An interesting fact is that rhymed lines are the norm in the Airs (the first major division of the anthology), but there are fewer lines in rhyme in the Elegantiae (the second major division), and the fewest rhymed lines in the Zhou Hymns (the most important sub-division of the third major division). Above the level of the single verse, several verses, usually fixed in number, are grouped into stanzas. Here, the diversity and complexity exhibited by the anthology is telling. Different effects can be created by different numbers of lines in each stanza, by different numbers of stanzas in each poem, by the alternation of stanzas with different numbers of lines, by the same number of stanzas with the same number of lines, and so on. The overall effect emphasized on this level of metrical form is euphony, balance, and symmetry. Moving then to the level of textual construction, including formulas and set phrases, the essential question is whether the anthology originated in a folk tradition of spontaneous oral composition or in the ritual tradition of the Zhou court. To put it more bluntly, where does the Chinese poetic tradition find its roots? As a model for explanation, should we favor the Airs, or the Elegantiae and the Hymns? The last feature of the formal elements discussed by Chen and Williams, that is, the use of imagery, and in particular, the use of the much-debated *xing*-images, turns the balance to the Airs, since these images are more frequently used there than in the other two divisions, and "seem to play a profound role in creating the musical effect of the poems" (269).

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[7] Cf. Aristotle, *Poetics*, chap. 13, 1453a30-9.

What poetic effect is intended and achieved by the *Shijing*? All the formal elements, but especially the two distinctive features of end-rhyme and the use of *xing*-images, point to the musical effect. This is a point well stressed by the two authors at the beginning of their discussion: "the musicality of the *Shijing* extends from language to global structure, determining the formal features of poems and the divisions of the anthology as a whole" (257). However, these distinctive features are most common in the Airs as compared to the Elegantiae and the Hymns, inviting many modern scholars to take the former as paradigmatic of *shi*-poetry, creating musical effect by giving spontaneous expressions of emotion. This view stands in stark contrast to that of the majority of the traditional scholars, who believe that the Elegantiae and, most importantly, the Hymns had a normative function to create musical effect by regularizing emotions with ritual. The priority given to either the Airs or the Elegantiae and the Hymns in the search for the poetic effect of the *Shijing* betrays a tension in its status, a tension we will more readily detect when we look at its structural principles.

Structural principles: the search for "poetic unity"

Following the lead of Seth Schein, among others, Mutschler and Schmdit distinguish between the static and dynamic structural principles of the two Homeric epics. The former, including the techniques of parallelism and ring composition, bring about the sense of proportion, balance and harmony, and contribute to the intrinsic formal unity of the epics. But the two authors apparently favor the latter, since these dynamic structural principles are the great achievement of Homer and give what they term a "thematic unity" to the two epics. This is a unity based on the three criteria of time, hero and action. To summarize their conclusions, the time-frame of both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* is contracted to a short period, and both epics have at its center one hero engaged in one action. The main theme of the *Iliad* is focused on the one action of one hero, "the wrath of Achilles", and this theme is narrated in a sequence of incidents that subsumes the threefold layer of interdependent actions (i.e. the "Iliad", the "Achilleid" and the "Patrocly"). The main theme of the *Odyssey* is again focused on the one action of one hero, "the homecoming of Odysseus", and this theme is narrated in a sequence of incidents that first split and then merge two strands of action, with Telemachus' and Odysseus' homecomings each staged independently in the first half of the epic but joined together in the second half.

Clearly, this analysis of "thematic unity" hinges on the notion of plot, which Mutschler and Schmidt understand in the Aristotelian sense of *mythos*. It suffices to quote the conclusion of their discussion on the *Iliad*: "The *Iliad* narrates one story (*mythos*), it presents the imitation (*mimêsis*) of one action (*praxis*)" (245).[8] Now, a plot-structure (*mythos*), according to Aristotle, must have, above all, unity of action. It must not be a series of episodes or a series of adventures of a particular hero, but a causally ordered sequence of incidents that reaches its completion to bring about the intended effect. A comparison of the two Homeric epics with the other epics in the Trojan Cycle confirms again the uniqueness of the former in achieving the "dramatic unity of action", as defined by Aristotle. Indeed, the philosopher praises this as what most essentially makes Homer superior to the other epics (see *Poetics*, chap. 23, quoted by Mutschler and Schmidt on 249-50). As for a comparison of the two Homeric epics with each other, one must again infer from Aristotle's ranking of the differently constructed plots that the *Iliad* with its single plot that involves a change from good to bad fortune caused by tragic error is superior to the *Odyssey* with its double plot that deals out contrasting fortunes for the good and the bad.[9]

Turning to the *Shijing*, we are not surprised to find that an anthology displays a completely different conception of poetic unity, or what the two authors call "a sense of coherence". What structural principles are at work in helping to create such a sense? Chen and Williams suggest that we look at two levels: the anthology as a whole, its major divisions and sub-divisions, and the internal arrangement within one division or sub-division. On the first level of "macro-structure", the tripartite structure of the whole anthology, namely, its major divisions into the three sections of Airs, Elegantiae (sub-divided into the Lesser and the Greater) and Hymns, can be simply considered three "genres" of *shi*-poetry based on origin or function. But is there an overarching scheme to the divisions and their sequential order? The Airs were probably folk songs later standardized by court musicians, sharing many themes with the Lesser Elegantiae, while the Greater Elegantiae and the Hymns resemble each other not only in theme but also in their origin as court songs. Thus, the three major divisions can be further grouped into the Airs and the Lesser Elegantiae on the one hand, and the Greater Elegantiae and the Hymns on the other, moving from the more mundane spheres of daily life to the more stately sphere of court and eventually the utmost solemnity of ancestral temple. Within each division, the Airs are divided into 15 regions, i.e. 2 southern regions under Zhou rule followed by 13 northern regions;[10] the Elegantiae are divided into the Lesser and the Greater, the former supposedly originate from regional courts of the states under Zhou rule and the latter focus on Zhou and its conquest of Shang; the Hymns are divided into Zhou Hymns, Lu Hymns and Shang Hymns.[11] Chen and Williams believe that they can detect an overall movement that underlies this major structural design: "the tripartite structure of the anthology leads from the various subordinate states back to the central Zhou court" (277). Or, to put it another way, the underlying structural principle appears to be a linear progression from the more mundane affairs of the regions under Zhou rule to the state affairs of the Zhou kings, and finally to the deeds of the former sage-kings who embody the ideal relations between the Heavenly and the Human.

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[8] A similar conclusion ends the discussion on the *Odyssey*, see 247.

[9] Aristotle, *Poetics*, chap. 13, 1453a12-39.

On the second level of "micro-structure", the order of individual songs within each division or sub-division can take on different meanings in different interpretations. Traditional *Shijing* scholars, for example, have put forward the theory of the "four beginnings", i.e. the opening poem of each division (*si shi* 四始, Lesser and Greater Elegantiae taken as two divisions), and the theory of the bipolarity of "proper" and "deviant" in the Airs and the Elegantiae (*zheng bian* 正變). Both are attempts, though not entirely successful, to give meaning to the order of the songs by looking for a thematic progression within each division. But we need not abide by the order of songs in the received text of the Mao recension. There is evidence that songs can be performed in musical suites, and the sequence of performance is usually not that of the received text, but the choice of the performer so as to convey the intended effect or message of that particular performance. Even if we accept the internal arrangement of the songs as they are, we still cannot exclude the possibility that the anthology was deliberately structured in such a way that skillful performers could select the songs in an infinite number of sequences to convey an infinite number of meanings.

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[10] Is there a significance to the order of these regions? Traditionally, scholars have thought so. But this is not the place to go into the details.

[11] Traditional scholars have again argued for the design of the Zhou, Lu and Shang Hymns in that order.

The "sense of coherence" that emerges from these two levels of structure seems to be in some sort of tension. While on the level of "macro-structure" there is a determination to accept the order of the three divisions and that of their sub-divisions as best realized in the received text so as to give the *Shijing* the status of a classic with complex internal structure, on the level of "micro-structure", the order of the internal arrangement of each sub-division is somewhat loose, so that the collection amounts to no more than a repertoire of songs, and thus retains the appearance of an anthology. It is not difficult to see that this tension, which arises in the search for the poetic unity of the *Shijing*, must be understood in the context of its exceptional status as both the oldest anthology of Chinese literature, i.e. the foundation text of the Chinese poetic tradition, and the primordial classic, one of the foundation texts of Chinese classical studies. For these three hundred poems, the tension between being an anthology and a classic pertains to this day.

From Foundation Texts to Philosophical Poetics

Two sets of cultural premises are at work in conditioning the search for the "poetic effect" and "poetic unity" of Homer and the *Shijing*. In the case of the Homeric epics, the Aristotelian notions of tragic effect and dramatic unity loom large, whereas, in the case of the *Shijing*, the search for the musical effect and the "sense of coherence" has to build on the Mao recension and its integrated poetics. Now, Aristotle's *Poetics* and the Mao recension represent two pre-dominant philosophical poetics in ancient Greece and ancient China, respectively. It must be pointed out that philosophical poetics in both cultures were not mere theoretical elaborations of the burgeoning ideas of poetic thought in the foundation texts, but emerged as the outcome of philosophical confrontation with poetry and its potentially intractable experience, mak-

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ing rational attempts to subsume it under a philosophical model of knowledge and truth. In ancient Greece, philosophers such as Socrates, Plato and Aristotle deployed a number of modes to confront and compete with the authority of the poet as invested in Homer while, in ancient China, Confucius and his followers, such as Mencius and Xunzi, were concerned to integrate the *Shijing* into their system of the Six Arts and the education of the Confucian sage.

How do philosophical poetics reshape the poetic thought of these foundation texts? To start with Homer, the distinctive or unique features of Homer we have discovered, i.e. the pervasive use of direct speech in terms of formal elements, and dramatic unity in terms of structural principles, make the two epics superior to the other epics, and establish them as the foundation texts. But as a consequence of our discovery, we are very close to turning the Homeric singer of tales into the proto-dramatist that lies at the heart of Aristotle's treatment of epic in the *Poetics*.[12] What is at stake in this transformation?

Let us return to the self-definition of Homeric epic poetry, summarized in the expression "the deeds of men and gods, on which the singers confer glory". What gives the Homeric singer of tales the authority to sing? It is well known that Homer, like other early poets, resorted to the divine patronage of the Muses, and claimed access to a poetic truth (otherwise inaccessible to mortals) through a temporary state of divine inspiration. They configured their relations with these goddesses in a variety of ways to represent this originary experience of poetry as divine inspiration. To begin the Catalogue of Ships in the *Iliad* (2. 483-93), the poet invokes the Muses, who know everything, to provide him with accurate information. A poet such as Hesiod, when inspired by the Muses, can sing of "things that are, things that will be and things that were" (*Theogony* 38, cf. 32). This type of divine inspiration amounts to a temporary omniscience that gives the poet access to divine truth.[13] The status of the poet as "master of truth" and the nature of their "divine truth" turned out to be a vital problem in the competitive context of Greek culture, when other forms of knowledge including philosophy, sophistry, and history, evolved one after another from poetry. Philosophy, especially that of Plato and Aristotle, constructed an explicit poetics by exploring the various dimensions of mimesis in its competitive claim for truth. In this context, the process of configuring the implicit poetics of the poets into the explicit poetics of the philosophers is not merely an attempt to give a systematic account for a preexisting tradition of poetic thought, but rather a special way to compete with the poet and eventually replace his authority.

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[12] Admittedly, Aristotle was not the first to discern the dramatic quality of Homer. Athenian tragedians and Plato preceded him. Nevertheless, in judging drama (tragedy) to be superior to epic and making Homer the proto-dramatist, Aristotle no doubt pushed his case to an extreme.

[13] Vernant 2006, 115-38; Detienne 1996, 39-43.

As the end product of this tradition, it is truly remarkable that Aristotle's *Poetics* restricts both the scope and substance of the poetry under investigation to allow the mimetic model its full interpretive power. Only epic and dramatic poetry are taken into consideration, while the non-dramatic genres, such as elegy, iambos, and various types of lyric poetry are ignored. Within this restricted scope, poetry or rather dramatic poetry, is to represent its true subject-matter, namely, "people in action", how they would necessarily or probably speak and act. We can see that Aristotle's conception of *mythos* as plot-structure is closely linked to his mimetic model of poetry. *Mythos* is both the design, the poet's construction, the form, and the substance of traditional myth, the content of a poem. In short, *mythos* in Aristotle's sense, is the mimetic representation of an action in unity, proportion and coherence. The poet is thus restricted to being a *mimêtês*, ideally speaking not in his own person, but through his characters, so as to enact and not to narrate the *mythos*.

In a sense, Aristotle finally put "the ancient quarrel between poetry and the philosophy" re-launched by Plato to a stop. By employing the model of mimesis to its full extent and moving the farthest away from the model of inspiration (still powerful in Plato's *Ion* and *Phaedrus*), Aristotle was able to incorporate poetics into his overall system of philosophical knowledge, placing it firmly in the productive part of his tripartite division. Poetry now had its fixed place between philosophy and history, but no longer had access to the highest truth.

On the Chinese side, the tension we have underlined between the dual status of the *Shijing* (as literary anthology and as Confucian classic) points to the process of Confucian canonization, which culminated in the Mao recension. As a result of this process of turning the *Three Hundred Songs* into the *Shijing*, almost all other earlier poems were displaced, so poetry was understood paradigmatically, if not exclusively, in terms of the *shi*-poetry. Another result is the crucial fact that although the poems were a heterogeneous body of poetry, the Confucians insisted on their uniform character, most importantly in what constituted the poetic experience.

The originary poetic experience that crystallized in the *Shijing* can be found in the earliest canonical statement of Chinese poetics, which we see in the *Classic of Documents*: "Poetry verbalizes intent, and song prolongs words".[14] The statement that "poetry verbalizes intent" is generally considered to be the first programmatic and most authoritative principle of Chinese poetics. It is an "etymological" definition, playing with the two characters *shi* 詩 and *zhi* 志,[15] but as Stephen Owen points out, the assumption beneath this canonical definition of Chinese poetry is the model of an internal-external correlation. What is internal, the intention on the mind of the poet, gets verbalized in a poem as its external manifestation. When the mind is fixed on something, it incites external manifestation, of which poetry is a prime form.[16]

There was ample scope in this originary experience of poetry to make it an expression of the poet's unique personality through his individual disposition. A different kind of disposition could be ingrained in a different kind of personality. The truth of poetry could be the truthful record of the poet's inner life and experiences, thus giving expression to exemplary personalities of different types. However, the Confucian tradition of canonization took the expression of the poet's personality in the *Shijing* to be paradigmatically normative, so the internal dimension of the *zhi* (intention) was subsumed under its external dimension as moral and social norms. Furthermore, since poetry has the power to recreate in its recipient this intention that defined the personal disposition of the author, it is important to relive the poetic experience in its recreation. In the canonizing process of the *Shijing*, the question of how to articulate and express the intention as one's essential personality into poetry was gradually taken to be paradigmatically resolved and perfectly embedded in the text. So, how the outer manifestation (poem) may be used as an indication of the inner state (intention) constitutes the central problem for the Confucian tradition. Here, the primary concern is how to be stirred by the emotional efficacy of poetry (*xing yu shi* 興於詩) and internalize it into one's own intention.

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[14] Shanshu, "Yaodiao": "詩言志，歌永言。 This statement is allegedly made by the mythical king Shun to his music minister Kui, connecting poetry closely with music,

[15] I follow here the reconstruction of *shi* 詩 and *zhi* 志 presented by the literary scholar Wen Yiduo 2006, 151-3.

[16] Owen 1992, 26-9. Here, I am taking the statement in the *Book of Documents* as the earliest articulation of the originary poetic experience persisting throughout Chinese history. It generated a number of later elaborations, reaching its most authoritative re-formulation in the "Great Preface". The latter, of course, synthesized many of the ritual, political and aristocratic elements of Han poetics into its re-formulation and elaboration.

To conclude, philosophical poetics culminating in Aristotle's *Poetics* and the Mao recension of the *Shijing* (with its integrated poetics manifested in the Great Preface) are still decisive in our search for the "poetic effect" and "poetic unity" of the two foundation texts compared here. On the Greek side, Aristotle the philosopher, while appreciating the literary and aesthetic achievements of Homer, established the philosophical discipline of poetics to transform poetical into philosophical truth. On the Chinese side, the Confucian exegetes working on the Mao recension, under the guise of canonization, aimed to impose their own values in compiling and commenting on the *Shijing*. Despite the different strategies used [illegible] these philosophical confrontations with poetry, I suggest that further explorations into the cultural processes that reshaped the originary poetic experience inherent in each of the two foundation texts of poetic thought into two distinct traditions of philosophical poetics can throw more light on a comparative understanding of the formal elements and structural principles of Homer and the *Shijing*.[17]

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[17] I wish to thank Professor Fritz-Heiner Mutschler for inviting me to make comparative comments at the 2014 Beida Conference on Homer and the *Shjing*, out of which this small essay grew. It has been a daunting but rewarding task. I am also grateful to him and to the other three authors of the two papers on which I base my comparison for their positive reactions and constructive suggestions to an earlier version of these comments.

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1

ILIAD AND *ODYSSEY*: STORY, CONCERNS, SCENES

Øivind ANDERSEN

The *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* have much in common, and may legitimately be treated together as "Homeric poems." This applies to the poems' origin, philological reception, and cultural role, as well as to their language and style, including such features as formulas, typical scenes, and the frequent use of character speeches. Although they are crafted in different ways, both poems are grand and complex structures with concentrated plots, playing out during a few days of intense action within the longer time-span covered by each poem as a whole. Both poems are situated in the same heroic past and elaborate the story of Troy. In certain respects, the *Odyssey* can be read as a continuation of the *Iliad*. Still, in spite of all they share, there is a striking contrast between the world of the *Iliad* and that of the *Odyssey*, between the action and atmosphere of the two poems and the aspirations of their main characters. Ever since antiquity, some have thought that the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* are the works of two different poets. However that may be, when it comes to their contents and concerns, it seems appropriate to treat the two poems separately.[1]

The *Iliad*[2]

When the *Iliad* begins, we are ten years into the Achaeans' siege of Troy in Asia Minor.[3] Much has happened up to that point, of which we

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[1] For instructive and quite different introductions to Homer, see Owen 1947, Bowra 1972, Latacz 1996, Powell 2004, Graziosi and Haubold 2005, Dalby 2006.

[2] Two good general books on the *Iliad* are Edwards 1987 and Mueller 2009.

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are offered glimpses in the course of the poem. The main past event is the abduction of Menelaus' wife Helen by Paris, son of Priam the king of Troy. That eventually led to the launching of a great expedition to retrieve her, under the command of Menelaus' brother Agamemnon, and with the participation of a host of "heroes" from all over Greece, including Achilles, the greatest of them all. At some point during the protracted war, the Achaeans sacked the city of Chryse. From among the spoils, Agamemnon took the young girl Chryseïs for himself, while Achilles got Briseïs. In the opening scene, Chryseïs' father, a venerable priest of Apollo, appears in the Achaean camp to offer Agamemnon a ransom for his daughter. Agamemnon harshly refuses and sends him away. The priest prays to Apollo to make the Danaans pay for his tears; Apollo sends a plague upon the Achaeans. On the tenth day, out of concern for the afflicted army, Achilles calls an assembly. After a seer has revealed the cause of the plague, Agamemnon reluctantly agrees to hand back Chryseïs. But he insists on receiving instant compensation for his loss by having Briseïs fetched from Achilles' quarters. Achilles becomes furious, and is on the verge of drawing his sword in the ensuing quarrel. In the end, he lets Briseïs go, convinced that he will be amply compensated later. Achilles complains to his mother, the sea-goddess Thetis, asking her to persuade Zeus to give the Trojans the upper hand in battle; thus, Agamemnon will come to regret bitterly his outrageous act. Thetis secures Zeus' consent. Achilles sits in anger beside his swift ships; he will not go to the council nor join the battle any more (Book 1).

The following day, Agamemnon has some difficulty in motivating the Achaeans, but they eventually prepare to fight (2). Both armies advance to the field. An attempt is made first to settle the conflict through single combat between Helen's two men, Paris and Menelaus; it ends in a draw (3). Pandarus, an archer on the Trojan side, breaks the truce by shooting at Menelaus, and the battle begins. At first, things go well for the Achaeans, with Diomedes fighting particularly brilliantly. A sense of crisis arises on the Trojan side. Their greatest fighter, Hector, brother of Paris, goes inside the city to tell the women to pray. Another single combat, this time between Hector and Ajax, is inconclusive. Gradually, the Trojans get the upper hand and the Achaeans

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[3] In Homer, the people from the Greek mainland and archipelago are called Achaeans, Danaans or Argives; the Trojans are also called Dardanians.

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withdraw behind the fortifications they built to protect themselves and their ships (4-8). At this low point, Agamemnon follows Nestor's advice and approaches Achilles through his envoys Ajax, Odysseus, and old Phoenix. Although Achilles is offered lavish compensation if he joins battle again, he refuses. Phoenix's admonitions are to no avail (9). After a night raid by Diomedes and Odysseus (10), fighting resumes in the morning and the Achaean situation worsens. Achilles, who watches from afar, sends his close companion Patroclus to collect information. Patroclus meets Nestor, who urges him, in view of the critical situation, to fight even if Achilles himself should refuse to do so, and advises him to wear Achilles' armor in order to terrify the enemy (11). The battle rages on and the situation gets even worse for the Achaeans (12-15). Back in Achilles' tent, Patroclus pleads to be allowed to don Achilles' armor and lead out his men. Achilles complies but cautions Patroclus against trying to mount the walls of Troy. Patroclus fights fiercely until he is carried away by his success, attempts to climb the wall, and falls victim to Hector. Hector robs the fallen Patroclus of his armor, while the Achaeans manage to salvage his body (16-17). Achilles is stricken with grief and beset with lust for revenge, although he knows that his own death will follow soon upon that of Hector. Achilles' mother has Hephaestus fashion new armor for him, including an elaborately decorated shield (18). After a half-hearted reconciliation between Agamemnon and Achilles, the latter prepares for battle (19). Fighting flares up with unmatched intensity until Achilles confronts Hector in single combat and is victorious. Achilles repeatedly drags Hector's corpse around the walls of Troy, then leaves it unburied (20-22). The ghost of Patroclus appears to Achilles and asks to be buried; he is buried with all due rites and honored with funeral games (23). Later, Priam secretly visits Achilles in the dead of night. In spite of much tension, they achieve a kind of shared understanding of the human condition, of which suffering is an essential component. Priam is allowed to bring Hector's body back to Troy, where he is mourned and buried. Thus, the *Iliad* comes to an end. Future events and the outcome of the Trojan War are only alluded to in the *Iliad*, which is essentially about Achilles' wrath and its consequences.[4]

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[4] The whole story was told in a series of minor epics, of which only fragments and quotations are known. The material is presented and discussed in Kullmann 1960 and Burgess 2001.

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War

Achilles' wrath underlies the plot and indeed the drama of the *Iliad*. But war – war in general, rather than the Trojan War – looms large in the poem, which is full of the din of battle, mass fighting, serial killings, single combats, gore, and death.[5] While the story of the *Iliad* unfolds over 52 days, the bulk of the poem, from Book 2 to 23, covers only six days, of which four are dominated by fighting, reported roughly in Books 4-7, 8, 11-18, and 19-23, respectively. Often the fighting is described in great and varied detail. Weapons cut throats and pierce eyes; the trunk of one man rolls along on the soil, while the head of another swirls to the ground.[6] The following passage gives an impression of the graphic immediacy of fighting and dying that is characteristic of large portions of the *Iliad*:

> The Danaans bent the Trojans back, and each of the princes
> killed his man. And first the lord of men Agamemnon
> hurled tall Odios, lord of the Halizones, from his chariot.
> For in his back even as he was turning the spear fixed
> between the shoulders and was driven on through the chest beyond it.
> He fell, thunderously, and his armour clattered upon him.
> Idomeneus killed Phaistos the son of Maionian Boros,
> who had come out of Tarne with the deep soil. Idomeneus
> the spear-renowned stabbed this man just as he was mounting
> behind his horses, with the long spear driven in the right shoulder.
> He dropped from the chariot, and the hateful darkness took hold of him.
> The henchmen of Idomeneus stripped the armour from Phaistos,
> while Menelaus son of Atreus killed with the sharp spear
> Strophios' son.
> (*Il.* 5.37-50)[7]

The general melee is set before our eyes in gory detail for another forty verses. The killings are large-scale and yet specific and individual. On the Trojan side, Othryoneus is hit by a spear, "and the corselet / of bronze he wore could not hold, the spear fixed in the middle belly" (13.371f.); Asius is struck "in the gorge underneath the chin" (13.388).

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[5] The overall tactics and technical details are difficult to grasp; see Albracht 2005, Van Wees 1994, Fenik 1968, Latacz 1977.

[6] See the detailed discussion in Friedrich 2003.

[7] All quotations from the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* are taken from Richmond Lattimore's translations. I have kept his spelling.

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On the Achaean side, for instance, Amphimachus is hit "with a spear in his chest as he swept into battle … he fell, thunderously, and his armor clattered upon him" (13.186f.); Epigeus is hit "with a stone in the head, and all the head broke into two pieces / inside the heavy helmet, and he in the dust face downward / dropped" (16.578f.). Sometimes the description is more rapid and summary (e.g. 6.29-36), or there may be sheer catalogues of victims, as in the case of Odysseus – "he killed Koiranos, and Chromios, and Alastor, / Halios and Alkandros, and Prytanis and Noemon" (5.677f.; cf. e.g. 5.705-7; 8.274-6). Sometimes there is only a general report: "[and] now at the various gates various men fought each other" (12.175; cf. e.g. 16.777f.). Wholesale butchery calls for victims on both sides. Many minor fighters appear briefly only to be killed.[8]

On the high end, there is the *aristeia,* in which major heroes display their "excellence" in battle through a martial *tour de force*. The *aristeia* typically opens with a more or less detailed arming of the hero, followed by a sequence of destructions of minor figures, and finally an extensive encounter with a major enemy in which the hero may win or lose. Teucer performs a minor *aristeia* (8.266-334), while Agamemon appropriately receives an *aristeia* on a larger scale (11.15-263), including an elaborate arming scene. In antiquity, Book 5 and part of Book 6 were referred to simply as "the *aristeia* of Diomedes": the young hero dominates the fighting in several waves of action, killing many enemies and scaring both Ares and Aphrodite off the battlefield. Patroclus has his great *aristeia* in Book 16, in which, after initial success, including even the slaying of Sarpedon, he succumbs to the successive assaults of Euphorbus, Apollo, and Hector. Books 20-22 contain the oversized *aristeia* of Achilles. Having emerged as the moral winner from a single combat with Aeneas, he slaughters Trojans ferociously and indiscriminately until he faces Hector outside the walls of Troy. In a scene that is larger than life, Achilles pursues the terrified Hector three times around the walls of Troy before killing him in a sinister single combat.

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[8] Some of them may belong to tradition, others will have been created *ad hoc* and have no existence outside the *Iliad.* The standard work is Strasburger 1954.

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Feats of war bring glory, and warriors can be glorious to behold.[9] But war essentially means suffering. The epithets for war are "painful", "rich in tears", "man-devastating", "bitter", and the like.[10] The rank and file of the Achaeans would love to leave and go home, as we learn from their reaction to Agamemnon's failed attempt to arouse their enthusiasm (2.142ff.). After the indecisive single combat between Menelaus and Paris, the Achaeans said to each other: "Surely again there will be evil war and terrible / fighting" (4.82f.). Menelaus at one point damns the Trojans for their insatiable lust for fighting (13.636-9). Fighting is terrible to behold:

> The battle where men perish shuddered now with the long
> man-tearing spears they held in their hands, their eyes were blinded
> in the dazzle of the bronze light from the glittering helmets,
> from the burnished corselets and the shining shields as men came on
> in confusion. That man would have to be very bold-hearted
> who could be cheerful and not stricken looking on that struggle.
> (*Il.* 13.339-44)

The companions of the war-god Ares are *Deimos* ("terror") and *Phobos* ("rout"), and his most common epithet is *brotoloigos* ("destroyer of men"). He is "loathsome" even to the other gods, and when "Ares" is not used metonymically for battle, he cuts a somewhat ridiculous figure (see especially 5.846-63; 21.391-406).

Beyond war

It is hard not to feel regret for the many warriors who get killed and are frustrated in their aspirations for a full and happy life. There are frequent references to what those who die shall miss: a promised bride, spirited horses, and, more generally, homecoming. "He never made it back home" is a regular topos in what has been labeled "obituary notices" for the fallen.[11] Protesilaus was the first to be killed at Troy; there remains his ship "that once had carried Protesilaus / to Troy, and did not take him back to the land of his fathers" (15.705f.). Often the

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[9] Cf. the description of Paris' appearance (6.503-14) and of Athene and Apollo watching the armies (7.61f.).

[10] When Nestor looks back on the war at Troy, he remembers "the evils they suffered" (*Od.* 3.103ff.; cf. also *Od.* 4.97-9).

[11] For the obituaries and the pathos of the *Iliad*, see Griffin 1980.

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main focus is on those who are left at home: children, spouses, parents. When Hippothous is killed by Ajax over the body of Patroclus, he "collapsed prone over the dead man / far away from generous Larisa, and he could not / render again the care of his dear parents; he was short-lived / beaten down beneath the spear of high-hearted Ajax" (17.300-3). Menelaus boasts to Euphorbus that Hyperenor's feet "shall no more carry him / back, to pleasure his beloved wife and his honored parents" (17.27f.).[12] When Priam goes to Achilles begging to have his son's body delivered to him, he stirs in Achilles "a passion for grieving / for his own father" (24.507f.) – "a single all-untimely child he had, and I give him / no care as he grows old, since far from the land of my fathers / I sit here in Troy, and bring nothing but sorrow to you and your children" (24.540-2).

The *Iliad* contains further intimations of another, peaceful world beyond the realm of Ares. They come in small installments, all the more effective for the contrast they provide to the pitiless violence of battle. There is the famous mention of "the two sweet-running well springs" outside the walls of Troy, past which Achilles pursues Hector before their final encounter: "the washing-hollows / of stone, . . . where the wives of the Trojans and their lovely / daughters washed the clothes to shining, in the old days / when there was peace" (22.153-6). And there is the encounter of Hector with his wife Andromache on the ramparts of Troy, where we are allowed a glimpse of marital love, a family reunion, with the baby Astyanax taking center stage (6.466-86).

Time and again, a world not of war but of daily life and work, of wild and domestic animals, landscape and weather, natural phenomena and heavenly bodies is brought before our eyes through vivid comparisons in the so-called epic similes.[13] The narrative is interspersed with them, and most densely so in the massive battle scenes, where we have already encountered some (cf. also e.g. 5.87-94; 13.177-82; 13.330-8). There are around 200 similes in the *Iliad*. Agamemnon compares hesitant warriors to "young deer / who after they are tired from running through a great meadow / stand there still and there is no heart of courage within them" (4.243-5). Achilles confronts Aeneas "like a lion, … / the baleful beast, when men have been straining to kill him, the county / all in the hunt, and he at the first pays them no attention / but

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[12] See further e.g. 11.391-3; 23.222f.

[13] Cf. Fränkel 1921; Vivante 1970; Moulton 1977; Edwards 1987, 102-10; Scott 2009.

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goes his way, only when some one of the impetuous young men / has hit him with the spear he whirls, jaws open, over his teeth foam / breaks out, and in the depth of his chest the powerful heart groans" (20.164-9, continuing through 173). Ajax retreats from the Trojans reluctantly, "as when a donkey, stubborn and hard to move, goes into a cornfield / in despite of boys, and many sticks have been broken upon him, / but he gets in and goes on eating the deep grain, and the children / beat him with sticks, but their strength is infantile; yet at last / by hard work they drive him out when he is glutted with eating" (11.556-61).

There are many attractive human touches in the similes. Apollo wrecks the bastion that the Achaeans have erected across the plain "as when a little boy piles sand by the sea-shore / when in his innocent play he makes sand towers to amuse him / and then, still playing, with hands and feet ruins them and wrecks them" (15.362-4). Athene brushes Pandarus' arrow away from Menelaus "as lightly as when a mother / brushes a fly away from her child who is lying in sweet sleep" (4.130f.). Achilles compares Patroclus weeping for the plight of the Achaeans to "some poor little girl", who "runs after her mother and begs to be picked up and carried / and clings to her dress, and holds her back when she tries to hurry, / and gazes tearfully into her face, until she is picked up" (16. 7-10).[14]

In the *Iliad*, the world gets its most complete, and literally rounded, representation on the Shield of Achilles, which forms part of the new armor that Thetis procures from Hephaestus to replace that which Hector has taken from Patroclus. We learn briefly of the other parts of the armor before the poet depicts in great detail the decoration on the shield (18.478-607). The shield is arranged in concentric circles, at the center of which are the heavenly bodies; there follows the city at peace,

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[14] There are far fewer similes in the *Odyssey*, where landscape, weather, animals, farming, and family life are more prominent in the action of the poem itself. Some of the Odyssean similes are rather striking, however, as when Odysseus lies awake and ponders how he can take his revenge on the suitors and punish the unfaithful maids in his household, and his heart "was growling within him", "as a bitch, facing an unknown man, stands over / her callow puppies, and growls and rages to fight" (20.14-16). He lies twisting and turning, "as a man with a paunch pudding, that has been filled with / blood and fat, tosses it back and forth over a blazing / fire, and the pudding itself strains hard to be cooked quickly" – a rather drastic illustration of his state of mind (20. 25-7).

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where the blessings of ordered communal life are represented by weddings and the peaceful settlement of a dispute over a man's death; then the city at war, or rather under siege, featuring ambush and cattle theft. Farming is then depicted in three scenes: plowing, reaping, and the vintage. The pictorial decorations of the shield are surrounded by the river Oceanus, as was the real world for the Greeks. The Shield can be read as a self-contained *ekphrasis* (a description of an art work). But it is not by accident that this concentrated, yet comprehensive, presentation of the world is placed on a piece of armor that will be worn by the greatest hero of the poem as he sets out on a furious killing spree.[15]

The hero

The protagonists of the *Iliad* are heroes – *hêrôes* – by virtue of their belonging to a distant "heroic" past, when men were mightier than they are now. They were able to throw rocks that the combined efforts of several men "as they now are" would not be able to move (cf. e.g. 5.302-4; 12.448f.). Heroes interact with the gods a great deal (as we shall see), and many are the offspring of gods: Achilles is the son of Thetis, Aeneas of Aphrodite, Sarpedon and Helen of Zeus, to give but a few examples. But the main characters in the *Iliad* are "heroes" not simply because they belong to a heroic generation or to a heroic genealogy. They need to live up to a heroic ideal and embody a heroic ethos.[16]

Only by fighting does the hero prove his special qualities and achieve the double goal to which he is committed: that of earning honor (*timê*) from his peers and securing glory (*kleos*) for the future. To fight and to prevail is best. But to fight and die is also heroic and conducive to *kleos*. In a quiet moment on the battlefield, Sarpedon ponders the privileges and obligations of the heroic life.[17] He addresses his cousin Glaucus, co-leader of the Lycian contingent that is fighting in support of the Trojans. Both are highly honored, he says, they are allotted the best plots of land and pride of place at banquets, indeed people look upon them as gods:

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[15] On the Shield of Achilles in its Iliadic context, see Schadewaldt 1965, 352-74; Andersen 1976; Taplin 1980.

[16] On aspects of the hero, see Nagy 1979, Schein 1984.

[17] On Sarpedon, see Clay 2009.

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> Therefore it is our duty in the forefront of the Lykians
> to take our stand, and bear our part of the blazing battle,
> so that a man of the close-armoured Lykians may say of us:
> "Indeed, these are no ignoble men who are lords of Lykia,
> these kings of ours, who feed upon the fat sheep appointed
> and drink the exquisite sweet wine, since indeed there is strength
> of valour in them, since they fight in the forefront of the Lykians."
> Man, supposing you and I, escaping this battle,
> would be able to live on forever, ageless, immortal,
> so neither would I myself go on fighting in the foremost
> nor would I urge you into the fighting where men win glory.
> But now, seeing that the spirits of death stand close about us
> in their thousands, no man can turn aside nor escape them,
> let us go on and win glory for ourselves, or yield it to others.
> (*Il.* 12.315-28)

Sarpedon here expresses the essence of the heroic ethos. First, privilege implies commitment. One is entitled to a position only as long as it is justified by one's achievements. Second, since death is certain, only heroic action can secure glory that will live on forever – a *kleos* that is *aphthiton* ("unperishable"), or simply *esthlon* ("good, excellent"). Hector gives voice to a similar sense of obligation and predicament as he explains that there is no way he can *not* fight, even though he knows the tragic outcome – for his family and for himself. One reason he gives is the deep shame he would feel before the men and women of Troy, "if like a coward I were to shrink aside from the fighting" (6.443). The other is that he has "learnt to be valiant / and to fight always among the foremost ranks of the Trojans, / winning for my own self great glory (*mega kleos*), and for my father" (6.444-6). His clinching argument for fighting is the certainty that "no man will hurl me down to Hades beyond my allotted portion, / but I think no one of men has escaped his allotment" (6.488f.). Death is inevitable, it will come in due time.

Hector has his greatest moments in Books 12-17, culminating in the slaying of Patroclus. However, his triumph entails his fall. The inevitable end is his terrible encounter with Achilles, the avenger of Patroclus. Hector "knows the truth inside his heart" and concludes on a truly heroic note: "[let] me at least not die without a struggle, inglorious, / but do some big thing first, that men to come shall know of it" (22.304f.). He then draws his sword and, gathering himself,

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> he made his swoop, like a high-flown eagle
> who launches himself out of the murk of the clouds on the flat land
> to catch away a tender lamb or a shivering hare; so
> Hector made his swoop, swinging his sharp sword, and Achilles
> charged.
>
> (*Il.* 22.308-12)

Achilles kills Hector, whose death graphically prefigures the fall of Troy: “[it] was most like what would have happened, if all towering / Ilion had been burning top to bottom in fire” (22.410f.).[18]

Human drama

In the very first verses of the *Iliad* we learn what the poem is about:

> Sing, goddess, the anger of Peleus’ son Achilles
> and its devastation, which put pains thousandfold upon the Achaeans,
> hurled in their multitudes to the house of Hades strong souls
> of heroes.
>
> (*Il.* 1.1-4)

Achilles’ wrath arises in the confrontation with Agamemnon, and the conflict between the two of them is central to the plot of the *Iliad*. But the most fundamental conflict is that within Achilles himself. He is the only character of the *Iliad* who lays bare to us his inner self. He is a special hero.

Achilles is the warrior on whom everything hinges. It is both unfair and unwise of Agamemnon to take Achilles’ prize away, as he does in Book 1. At a later stage, Agamemnon will actually admit to his *atê* or “blind folly” at the time (19.88). One might perhaps say that both Agamemnon and Achilles are oversensitive to the issue. But both of them are under the strain of honor (*timê*). The tangible expression of honor is privilege and possession; for Sarpedon (above) it consisted in the seat of honor at banquets and fertile plots of land. In the opening scene of the *Iliad*, Agamemnon cannot bring himself to relinquish Chryseïs, a piece of booty to which he is entitled by virtue of his royal status. When the plague finally forces him to yield, he does so only because he can receive a measure of compensation by taking Briseïs

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[18] See Schadewaldt 1965, 268-351 and Redfield 1975 for the character of Hector.

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from Achilles – something Achilles cannot accept. Achilles initially wishes to slay Agamemnon on the spot; but then he comes to realize that a better way to hurt him, and to achieve plentiful compensation at a later stage, is to quit the battle and let the king's army suffer. Yet somehow this does not work out. Something seems to go wrong with Achilles. For when Agamemnon, in dire straits, sends envoys to Achilles with the offer of truly magnificent compensation in the way of precious objects, horses, women, and cities, Achilles refuses (Book 9). This cannot be because Agamemnon's offer does not match what Achilles imagined when he restrained himself during the quarrel. For Achilles, the conflict has become something personal. He loathes Agamemnon, as becomes clear in his great speech of denunciation: "[for] as I detest the doorways of Death, I detest that man, who / hides one thing in the depths of his heart, and speaks forth another" (9.312f., cf. 9.344f.). Achilles refuses to deal with the commander-in-chief. That, however, leads him into conflict with his own self. Achilles has been given a choice of lives, as he explains to the envoys:

> For my mother Thetis the goddess of the silver feet tells me
> I carry two sorts of destiny toward the day of my death. Either,
> if I stay here and fight beside the city of the Trojans,
> my return home is gone, but my glory shall be everlasting;
> but if I return home to the beloved land of my fathers,
> the excellence of my glory is gone, but there will be a long life
> left for me, and my end in death will not come to me quickly.
> (*Il.* 9.410-6)

Glory (*kleos*) and a short life would be the obvious choice to make. At an earlier stage, we even heard from both his mother and Achilles himself that *that* was what he was destined for (1.352, 416). Now, instead, Achilles considers going back home to his old father, Peleus, who will find a wife for him, and "to enjoy with her the possessions won by aged Peleus" (9.400). Agamemnon is not worth fighting for, and no spoils can make up for death: "a man's life cannot come back again, it cannot be lifted / nor captured again by force, once it has crossed the teeth's barrier" (9.408f.). Achilles has come to doubt the value of heroic life and heroic death: "[fate] is the same for the man who holds back, the same if he fights hard. / We are all held in a single honour, the brave with the weaklings" (9.318f.). So Achilles opts out of it all.

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The *Iliad* then develops the tragic consequences of Achilles' wrath, as he yields to the appeals of Patroclus (on behalf of Nestor) that *he* be sent out as Achilles' stand-in, donning the greater hero's armor. The death of Patroclus at the hands of Hector arouses another kind of rage in Achilles, which quenches his wrath against Agamemnon. Achilles is consumed by a passionate drive to avenge his friend. He needs his mother to commission a new, divine armor, and she complies, although she declares: "then I must lose you soon, my child, by what you are saying, / since it is decreed your death must come soon after Hector's" (18.96f.). Achilles is *ôkymoros*, "soon to die", as he has known all along. Now he gladly accepts his fate. Death is unavoidable, so why linger? Even Heracles had to succumb to death. Achilles will go "to overtake that killer of a dear life, Hector; then I will accept my own death, at whatever / time Zeus wishes to bring it about, and the other immortals" (18.114-6). "[I] shall lie still, when I am dead. Now I must win excellent glory (*kleos esthlon*)" (18.121).

The *Odyssey*[19]

The *Odyssey* is both more unitary and more variegated than the *Iliad*. It is one man's story, but it draws on several narrative traditions and accommodates more of the world both geographically and socially. The *Odyssey* spans the ten years following the ten-year-long war at Troy. The action of the poem, however, unfolds within a much shorter period of time, during only 40 days, of which again over half are only counted and not filled with any activity.

After the prologue and an assembly of the gods, the scene shifts to Odysseus' home island of Ithaca, from which the hero has been absent for 20 years. His son, Telemachus, has now come of age and decides to speak up against his mother's suitors, who for a long time have pestered Penelope whilst devouring the resources of Odysseus' estate. Telemachus denounces them, collects a crew (Book 1-2), and goes first to Nestor in Pylos and then to Menelaus in Sparta to learn about his father (3-4). At the same time, far away, in the island of Ogygia, the moment has come for Odysseus to leave the nymph Calypso, with

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[19] For a good general introduction to the *Odyssey*, see Saïd 2011; for a variety of approaches to the poem, see Finley 1978, Murnaghan 1987, Hölscher 1988, Segal 1994, Thalmann 1998.

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whom he has stayed for seven years, sleeping beside her during the night while longing for his wife during the day. He builds a raft single-handedly and resumes his homeward voyage. After seventeen days, he is hit by a terrible storm. Barely alive, he is washed ashore at what turns out to be Scheria, the island of the Phaeacians (5). Exhausted and grimy, he comes upon princess Nausicaa and her friends, who have gone down to the riverbed to do laundry. Nausicaa is very much taken with the foreign gentleman that Odysseus turns out to be. She leads him into town and introduces him to her parents, Queen Arete and King Alcinous. Odysseus is entertained by the Phaeacians and proves himself both in athletic competitions and in courtly pursuits (6-8). He does not reveal his identity until he is moved to tears by a bard's celebration of the Trojan War in song: "I am Odysseus son of Laertes, known before all men / for the study of crafty designs, and my fame (*kleos*) goes up to the heavens" (9.19f.). In the so-called *apologoi*, Books 9-12, Odysseus recounts his adventures since he set out from Troy: Ciconians, Lotus-Eaters, the Cyclops Polyphemus, Aeolus lord of the winds, the oversized Laestrygonians, the sorceress Circe, the encounters in Hades, the Sirens, Scylla and Charybdis, the cattle of Helios, and finally Calypso's island, his last and longest stop before Scheria. The Phaeacians load a ship with gifts to make up for all that Odysseus has lost during his voyage, and secretly transport him back to Ithaca, where he finds shelter – under a false identity – with the loyal swineherd Eumaeus. Odysseus the stranger makes up a life-story for himself, as he will do later on with Penelope (13-14). Meanwhile, Telemachus leaves Sparta and, having avoided an ambush by the suitors, arrives in Ithaca. In the meantime, Eumaeus tells his own adventure-filled life-story to Odysseus (15). Telemachus now cautiously heads for Eumaeus' hut, where Odysseus reveals his identity to him and they discuss how to proceed (16). Telemachus goes home to be with his mother; Eumaeus takes Odysseus to his estate, where he pretends to be a wayfarer and a beggar, and is abused both by suitors and by disloyal servants. Argos, the old dog, recognizes his master and passes away peacefully (17). Odysseus is insulted in various ways; Penelope makes an appearance before the suitors and elicits generous gifts from them (18). Odysseus and Telemachus secretly remove weapons from the hall. Penelope takes an interest in the mysterious stranger, and the two of them have a long, psychologically interesting conversation in which he reveals that he once knew Odysseus, and that

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he thinks her husband will eventually return. As the old nurse Eurycleia washes Odysseus' feet, she recognizes him by a scar on his leg, but he manages to silence her (19). The atmosphere is tense (20). For many years, Penelope had resisted the suitors' pressures, keeping them at bay with the trick of the loom, whereby she pulled apart during the night what she had woven during the day. Now, she decides to organize an archery contest in order to select a new husband. She fetches Odysseus' bow and challenges the suitors to string it and shoot through a row of axes. Odysseus reveals his identity to Eumaeus and one other loyal servant. The suitors who attempt to string the bow fail. Penelope allows Odysseus to try, and leaves the hall. Odysseus manages to string the bow and shoot through the axes (21), and immediately begins to slaughter the suitors, who are killed to a man (22). There follows the final recognition of Odysseus by Penelope and their reunion in the bridal bed (23). The following day, Hermes takes the sad group of suitors to Hades, where they converse with Achilles; Agamemnon reports Achilles' funeral at Troy. Odysseus then reveals himself to his father, who lives modestly by himself. The suitors' families want revenge and there is a skirmish with a few casualties, following which Athene establishes peace (24).

Components of the Odyssey

The *Odyssey* is set after the end of the Trojan War, but the war remains a powerful presence in the poem. The homecoming – *nostos* – of the heroes belongs to the story of the war. Nestor relates to Telemachus what some of the other heroes had to endure on their way home (3.103-200), and the sad fate of Agamemnon, who on his return was murdered by his wife Clytemnestra and her lover Aegisthus, but was avenged by his son Orestes – a family story that will serve as a foil for the happy return of Odysseus throughout the poem.[20] The *Odyssey* provides Odysseus with the grandest *nostos* of all, but then he is one of the greatest Achaean heroes at Troy, in a sense the greatest, since he devised the stratagem of the Wooden Horse, thanks to which the Achaeans could enter the city. One of his epithets in the *Odyssey* is *ptoliporthos*, "destroyer of cities". Both Nestor in Pylos and Menelaus and Helen in Sparta constitute a link to the war at Troy in their own

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[20] The story of the house of the Atridae offers both parallel and contrast: 1.29; 1.298ff.; 3.193ff.; 306ff.; 4.512ff.; 11.409ff.; 13.383ff.; 24.193ff.

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persons – they were there! – and because they relate to Telemachus several episodes from the final stages of the war. Yet, besides providing the core cast of the *Odyssey* and a point of departure for Odysseus, Troy and the war – and perhaps more generally, heroic poetry in the tradition of the *Iliad* – are not the *Odyssey*'s concern. They are only one of three main material components in the poem.

Another element consists of tall stories, sailors' yarns, and horror tales about entering unknown waters, reaching the end of the world, encountering sorceresses and ogres, descending into the underworld, and talking with ghosts. This material entered the Greek epic tradition from a variety of sources, partly from the Near East (and perhaps especially Phoenicia), and partly from folk-tales and local legends. Much of it will have been in general circulation. These exotic ingredients are thrown into the story of Odysseus' homeward voyage from Troy. The passage to Ithaca by way of the Ciconians, the Lotus-Eaters, Polyphemus, Aeolus, the Laestrygonians, Circe, Hades, the Sirens, Scylla and Charybdis, Thrinacia, Calypso, and the Phaeacians make up his famous "wanderings." That is what many people today have in mind when they speak of "an odyssey".

Apart from allowing the audience to relish in the thrill of the exotic and the dramatic, Odysseus' wanderings offer an exploration of what lies beyond the human realm, both in the geographical sense and with respect to norms and values. At one extreme are the Cyclopes, whose island is "not a bad place at all" (9.131), but they "have no institutions, no meetings for counsels; / rather they make their habitations in caverns hollowed / among the peaks of the high mountains, and each one is the law / for his own wives and children, and cares nothing about the others" (9.112-5). On the island of Aeolus, "a floating island, the whole enclosed by a rampart / of bronze, not to be broken" (10.3f.), his six sons are married to his six daughters. The Laestrygonians, like the Cyclopes, are cannibals. The lovely sorceress Circe turns men into pigs, "like nine-year-old porkers" (10.390). In Hades, Odysseus encounters famous figures from the past, both female and male, including some who took part in the Trojan War. The ghost of Achilles enquires about Peleus, and laments his existence amongst the dead: "I would rather follow the plow as a thrall to another / man, one with no land allotted to him and not much to live on, / than be a king over all the perished dead" (11.489-91). On his way from Thrinacia, Odysseus is washed ashore on the island of Ogygia, "the navel of all the waters" (1.50),

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"home of Kalypso / with the lovely hair, a dreaded goddess who talks with mortals" (12.48f.). There he is granted over seven years of superhuman bliss. Calypso had wanted him as her husband (1.15) and hoped "to make him immortal and all his days to be endless" (5.136). As she is about to let him go, she points to the many hardships he will have to undergo as he crosses the ocean on his self-made raft – perhaps he ought to reconsider, "for all your longing once more to look on / that wife for whom your are pining all your days here" (5.209f.). Yet, although Odysseus admits that Penelope is no match for the immortal and ageless Calypso's beauty and stature, he knows what he wants: "[but] even so, what I want and all my days I pine for / is to go back to my house and see my day of homecoming" (5.219f.). He wishes for a return to normality. Ogygia is followed by the utopian world of the Phaeacians at Scheria, an island at the farthest edge of the world, so fertile and with such a mild climate that fruits grow there all year round. The people themselves are fond of pleasure and feasting and generally friendly, willing to escort strangers back to their homeland in their wonderful, magical ships. They are "near the gods in origin" (5.35) and "dear to the immortals" (6.203), who appear openly among them and sit beside them at feasts. They are at the other end of the spectrum.

The poet allows Odysseus himself to relate his adventures in retrospect to an internal audience of Phaeacians (Books 9-12, the so-called *apologoi*). This makes for a vivid and dramatic presentation by a true storyteller. It also allows for a suspension of belief, rather than of disbelief, on the audience's side: we see the entertaining storyteller in action. We do not really expect him to report the truth of things, like an epic poet in his own voice.

In the course of his wanderings, Odysseus loses men at nearly every turn, at sea or on land. There is a major disaster already during the first stop after Troy. Odysseus is keen to get away as soon as they have sacked the city of the Ciconians, but his men are "greatly foolish" (*mega nêpioi,* 9.44) and insist that they stay a little longer, a decision which leads to six men from each ship being killed. His last remaining companions drown at sea after having recklessly feasted on the cattle of Helios, in spite of Odysseus' warnings. Already in the prologue (1.5-9), the poet points out that Odysseus tried as best he could to save his comrades, and that they have only their own recklessness (*atasthalia*) to blame for their ruin. At another level, however, the plot de-

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mands that his companions disappear. As a hero of the Trojan War, he must be the leader of men and the commander of a fleet as he sets out. But as the lone avenger that he becomes once in Ithaca, he needs to be rid of his many men. Their successive elimination is taken care of by the wanderings.[21]

This brings us to a third element underlying the overall structure of the *Odyssey*: the story of the homecoming of the missing king and/or husband. The *Odyssey* offers a large-scale version of the folk-tale motif of the man whom everybody (except perhaps his beloved) thought to be dead, but who returns in the nick of time to win back his beloved and/or his realm. Another folk-tale motif is that of the stranger or presumed underdog who can wield a weapon and pass a test that is beyond anyone else's physical or intellectual capacity.[22]

The first two books and the second half of the *Odyssey* take place on Ithaca. Troy is far away, and Odysseus' wanderings, although they finally take him to his goal, lie even further beyond the familiar world. The Greeks were a sea-faring people, and the *Odyssey* was created in times of maritime expansion and exploration. Thus, the poem may contain reflections of the real Mediterranean world. It is likely that the poet had some idea of the directions in which Odysseus sailed and the distances he covered, and about the location of some of the places in which he stopped.[23] Yet in spite of the many ingenious efforts spent on this topic since antiquity, it has not been – and never will be – possible to pin down Odysseus' route on a real map.

Odysseus the man

The key theme of the *Odyssey* is Odysseus himself, as the opening verses of the poem announce:

> Tell me, Muse, of the man of many ways, who was driven
> far journeys, after he had sacked Troy's sacred citadel.
> Many were they whose cities he saw, whose minds he learned of,

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[21] On the structure of the *apologoi*, see Reinhardt 1960, Most 1989.

[22] On folk-tales, see Page 1973.

[23] Some refuse to identify the Odyssean island of Ithaca with the island off the west coast of Greece that was called by that name in later times, as it still is today. Bittlestone 2005 is a serious study.

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> many the pains he suffered in his spirit on the wide sea,
> struggling for his own life and the homecoming of his companions.
> (*Od.* 1.1-5)

The "man of many ways" or "of many turns" (*polytropos*) traveled and encountered many cities and men because he was tossed around at sea, and could not remain on a straight homeward journey. Yet he was also driven by an urge to explore the world, to learn and experience things. Emblematic of Odysseus' craving for knowledge is his encounter with the Sirens. The Sirens' song enchants all those who hear it and makes them want to remain and listen, leading them to end up rotting on the shore. The Sirens greet Odysseus as the glory of the Achaeans and a hero of whom much is told; they claim that they know all that happened at Troy, and add for good measure that they know everything that happens on earth. Odysseus is more than keen to listen. Circe has warned Odysseus against the Sirens, and advised him on how to listen to them and still escape. Following her instructions, he blocks his crew's ears with wax to ensure that they do not get distracted and continue rowing, while he has himself tied to the mast so that he can listen to the Sirens' song without succumbing to their enchantment. He perceives their clear voice, and grasps the subject of their alluring song – Troy and the world. Yet he is tied up, and has ordered his men not to release him under any circumstances, even if he signals to them with his eyes that he wishes to be set free (which is, of course, what he wants at this point). He passes by the Sirens safely, and it is only when they have rowed well past them and can no longer hear their voices that his men remove the wax from their ears and set Odysseus free (12.38-54, 154-200).

For all his curiosity, Odysseus is for the most part cautious and patient. These two qualities become especially important in the second half of the poem, when the as yet unrecognized Odysseus is subject to humiliation at home and still manages to control himself. As he overhears the disloyal maidservants chattering, his inclination is to kill them straight away; yet although "the heart was growling within him", he speaks to his heart and scolds it: "[bear] up, my heart. You have had worse to endure before this / on that day when the irresistible Cyclops ate up / my strong companions, but you endured it until intelligence / got you out of the cave, though you expected to perish'" (20.18-21; the word translated as "intelligence" is *mêtis*, "cunning"). The Cyclops episode, however, beyond bearing witness to Odysseus' patience, is a

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display of yet another of his characteristic qualities: his cunning. The escape from the Cyclops' cave is emblematic of Odysseus' cunning and resourcefulness. After getting Polyphemus drunk and blinding him as he sleeps, Odysseus engineers an escape from the Cyclops' cave for himself and those of his men whom the monster has not devoured, by clinging to the bellies of the Cyclops' sheep as they are let out. The Cyclops feels the back of the sheep as they pass him on their way out, but does not detect those who clung underneath their bellies. In narrating the episode, Odysseus contrasts the Cyclops' guilelessness with his own cunning (9.442-5). The adventure with the Cyclops is a triumph; but it is also a somewhat sore point. Having reached the island of "the lawless, outrageous Cyclopes" (9.106), Odysseus wanted to "go and find out about these people, and learn what they are, / whether they are savage and violent, and without justice, / or hospitable to strangers and with minds that are godly" (9.174-6). Odysseus chose twelve companions to explore the Cyclops' cave; Polyphemus devoured six of them. At a later stage, when Eurylochus tries to dissuade his companions from going back to Circe with Odysseus, fearing (not unreasonably) that they will be transformed into "pigs or wolves or lions", he reminds them of what happened in Polyphemus' cave:

> So too it happened with the Cyclops, when our companions
> went into his yard, and the bold Odysseus was of their company;
> for it was by this man's recklessness that these too perished.
> (*Od.* 10.435-7)

Here Odysseus is held to account for the loss of some his men. The very word used to characterize his behavior, *atasthalia* ("recklessness"), is repeatedly applied (together with its cognates) to the suitors, whose "recklessness" led to their doom (e.g. 16.93, 18.143, 22.437). As we saw above, it is also used prominently (1.7) of Odysseus' companions, who were foolish enough to disobey Odysseus and feast on the cattle of the Sun.

Odysseus is accused of "recklessness" only by an annoyed companion; perhaps we may call it "recklessness light." His behavior is not always commendable in every respect. During his adventurous journey, he is occasionally tempted to gamble not only with his own security but also with that of his men. He cannot even deny himself the pleasure of taunting the Cyclops as soon as they are safely out at sea (9.492-5), proudly crying out that if anybody asks who blinded him, the Cyclops

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should “tell him that you were blinded by Odysseus, sacker of cities. / Laertes is his father, and he makes his home in Ithaca” (9.504f.). The plot requires Odysseus to be identified, for only by learning Odysseus’ identity can the Cyclops direct his father Poseidon’s revenge against him. Odysseus’ forceful affirmation of his identity creates a fine contrast with the name Outis, or “Nobody”, which he had applied to himself a little earlier in Polyphemus’ cave (9.366). In this way, he had cunningly prevented Polyphemus from mobilizing his Cyclopean neighbors to his assistance after his blinding. Polyphemus roared horribly and cried out to them, but to their concerned question “surely no one (*mê tis* – a play on the word *mêtis* (“cunning”) just as Outis is a play on Odysseus) can be killing you by force or treachery”, his answer was “*Nobody* is killing me by force or treachery” (9.405-8).

Another prominent theme in the *Odyssey* is Odysseus’ identity, or rather, how the missing husband and father, the unknown stranger, the hero from Troy lost at sea is gradually re-established for himself and for others as hero, king, husband, and father. In the first part of the poem, Odysseus’ absence is intensely felt. He is far away from home, or possibly dead and gone forever. Telemachus has come of age, but when Athene visits Ithaca in the form of Mentes and asks: “[are] you, big as you are, the very child of Odysseus? / Indeed, you are strangely like about the head, the fine eyes?", Telemachus answers that he does not know, that his mother says so, and anyway, that he would rather have been somebody else’s son than that of the most ill-fated Odysseus (1.212-20). In the course of the poem Telemachus shall be established as Odysseus’s son.

Mentes/Athene relates a few episodes from Odysseus’ early life to Telemachus. In Books 3 and 4 he learns more. He implores Nestor to tell him about “the great patient-minded Odysseus”, for there “is no man who can plainly tell us when he perished” (3.84-9). Odysseus comes to life in stories about his exploits: “there was no man who wanted to be set up /for cunning against great Odysseus; he far surpassed them / in every kind of stratagem” (3.120-2). In Sparta, both Helen and Menelaus recognize Telemachus because of his resemblance to his father: “for Odysseus’ feet were like this man’s, his hands were like this, and the glances of his eyes and his head and the hair growing” (4.149f.). They tell Telemachus more about Odysseus at Troy, his secret spying expedition into the city, and the master stratagem of the Wooden Horse. Towards the end of the conversation

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in Sparta, Menelaus reports what he heard from the Old Man of the Sea: Odysseus is stuck on an island with neither ship nor companions (4.556-60). Thus he is finally located, though very far away, and at a very low point. In Book 5, Hermes instructs Calypso to let Odysseus go. He has been lost to the world for many years, and is in danger of being lost forever, should he accept her offer of immortality. But he wishes to come home to Penelope.

From Ogygia, Calypso's island, Odysseus arrives at Scheria, the island of the Phaeacians. He is exhausted, naked, bereft of everything, a nameless stranger. Gradually he reclaims his old self. He proves himself a gentleman and an athletic champion; he has martial exploits to his credit, and the Phaeacians shower him with gifts. Finally, moved by a bard's singing about what happened at Troy, he cannot hide his tears and is brought to disclose his identity: "I am Odysseus son of Laertes" (9.19). Back in Ithaca, he reveals his identity only gradually, even to his friends. He spends a long time incognito in his own home, even with his own wife, until his identity is again revealed and he is reinstated.

Justice

A striking theme of the *Odyssey* is that of justice: recklessness (*atasthalia*) has consequences. This is already intimated in the prologue of the poem, where we hear that Odysseus could not save his comrades, for "they were destroyed by their own wild recklessness, / fools, who devoured the oxen of Helios, the Sun God, / and he took away the day of their homecoming" (1.7-9). The theme is then taken up in Zeus' great programmatic speech, where he complains that "the mortals put the blame upon us / gods, for they say evils come from us, but it is they, rather / who by their own recklessness win sorrow beyond what is given" (1.32-4). Not that Zeus makes men responsible for *all* that they suffer – only what is *hyper moron*, "beyond what is allotted" do they owe to themselves. Sometimes men act recklessly even in spite of warnings. Thus, Odysseus very explicitly warns his comrades not to touch the cattle of Helios; he even has them swear an oath on it (12.303). In his great speech, Zeus stresses that before Aegisthus murdered Agamemnon – an outrage for which he was to suffer death at the hands of Orestes – a divine messenger had explicitly warned him not to commit the evil deed. The theme of recklessness and retribution is developed on a larger scale in the action of the

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Odyssey as a whole: the intolerable suitors receive the punishment they deserve when Odysseus finally returns home. They may not have been explicitly warned, but they know that they have acted in complete disregard of social norms. Social norms are an important issue in the *Odyssey* – those that govern behavior between young and old, man and woman, master and slave, host and guest.[24]

In the *Odyssey*, there is poetic justice: things work out well for good people, and villains get what they deserve. After the suitors meet with their disastrous end at the hands of Odysseus, the hero – after a bath – is reunited with his wife in a moving scene: "Her knees and the heart within her went slack" (23.205), while "he wept as he held his lovely wife, whose thoughts were virtuous" (23.232). There follows a simile in which Penelope's sentiment is illustrated by imagery from Odysseus' experience:

> And as when the land appears welcome to men who are swimming,
> after Poseidon has smashed their strong-built ship on the open
> water, pounding it with the weight of wind and the heavy
> seas, and only a few escape the grey water landward
> by swimming, with a thick scurf of salt coated upon them,
> and gladly they set foot on the shore, escaping the evil;
> so welcome was her husband to her as she looked upon him,
> and she could not let him go from the embrace of her white arms.
> (*Od.* 23.233-40)

Odysseus and Penelope are allowed to spend time together: Athene extends the night and detains Dawn on the edge of the Ocean (23.241-6). Yet they do not quite live happily ever after, for the myth has more in store for Odysseus. He has learned that there are further journeys ahead, not on sea, but away from it, until he reaches people who know nothing of the sea and will mistake the oar that he carries for a winnowing shovel. There he shall sacrifice to Poseidon (23.267-81). Odysseus also knows that "Death will come to me from the sea, in / some altogether unwarlike way, and it will end me / in the ebbing time of a sleek old age" (23.281-3).

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[24] See Saïd 1979.

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The gods in Homer

Very little reference has so far been made to the gods and "divine action" in the two poems. The development of the plot of both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* can indeed be presented in (almost) purely human terms. But the Homeric gods are constantly active in various ways; their presence contributes an important aspect to the depiction of the heroic world.[25]

The gods inhabit Olympus, where "the far-renowned strong-handed Hephaestus" has built houses for them (*Il.* 1.607f.). Olympus is a high mountain in Thessaly – it is "rocky", "many-peaked", "snowy", "gleaming". Apollo strides down along "the pinnacles of Olympus" as he is about to shower the Achaean camp with arrows (*Il.* 1.44), while the sea-goddess Thetis emerges from the waves and goes "up to the tall sky and Olympus" (*Il.* 1.497). The gods are also said to live in a place untouched by rain, wind, or snow (*Od.* 6.43-5), in other words, in "heaven". In their proper realm, the gods live and behave like an unruly family. They eat and drink, and quarrel and threaten each other. Although Zeus, "the father of gods and men", wields the authority of a *paterfamilias*, he is subject to much opposition, especially from his wife, Hera. To some extent, then, the world of the gods is like a human world writ large. Yet there is a crucial difference: the gods are "immortal" and "live forever"; as we are often reminded by their epithets, they "live lightly" and are "blessed". Nothing can really matter to them. One may compare what Sarpedon says about heroic life in Book 12 of the *Iliad* (above): there would be no point in seeking future *kleos* if a man were to live forever. The life of the gods both mirrors and contrasts with that of humans, who, while they suffer more, have something for which to live and die.

Especially in the *Iliad*, the effect of the divine tier is heightened by the gods' role as a "divine audience". The gods often watch human action.[26] Their view from on high does not make human matters seem small and insignificant. On the contrary, the gods' overall interest and emotional involvement in the action elevate and enhance human endeavor. And as the gods feel pain and pleasure at what they see, they

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[25] Lefkowitz 2003, 30-112 is a good introduction; see also Otto 1954 for a bold interpretation.

[26] Griffin 1980, 179-204. How the *poet* envisions Troy is explored by Clay 2011.

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also steer audience perception. When Achilles pursued Hector around the walls of Troy, “they ran for the life of Hector, breaker of horses” like horses running round a turnpost; the two of them “swept whirling about the city of Priam / in the speed of their feet, while all the gods were looking upon them”. Zeus is sorry for his beloved Hector: “[ah] me, this is a man beloved whom now my eyes watch / being chased around the wall” (22.161ff.). Zeus pities Hector when he sees him wearing Achilles’ armor (17.198f.), and he pities Sarpedon as he goes out to encounter Patroclus and die (16.431f.). But the god does not save them. Before Zeus lets the other gods descend to earth to take part in the fighting, he declares: “I shall stay here upon the fold of Olympus / sitting still, watching, to pleasure my heart” (20.22f.).

Yet the gods are not wholly separated from human action, playing the role of onlookers only. The Olympians are fiercely partisan with regard to Troy: Athene, Hera, and Poseidon are the main champions of the Achaean case, while Apollo, Aphrodite, and Ares support the Trojans. Zeus tries to hold the balance, but since he promised Thetis that the Trojans shall prevail as long as Achilles does not fight, he has given free rein to Hector and made him over-confident. This is one reason why he is particularly sorry to see Hector go.

More importantly, except for trivial matters, the gods are *behind* what happens; they are *in* what happens, not only in natural evens but in humans’ thoughts, decisions, and actions. Human action is not merely human. The gods may even appear in the shape of human beings, like Hermes when he steps forward to assist Priam in the form “of a young man, a noble / with beard new grown” (*Il.* 24.347f.). In the *Odyssey*, Athene appears both as Mentes, a Taphian king visiting Ithaca (1.96ff.) and as Odysseus’ old friend Mentor, who is also a real character in the poem (2.223ff.; Athene as Mentor 2.267ff.; 3.12ff., etc.). She appears to Odysseus as a young shepherd boy (13.222f.). The gods may also interact with humans in their divine shape, as Athene does when she gets on to Diomedes’ chariot in Book 5 of the *Iliad*, or Apollo as he kills Patroclus on the walls of Troy (16.669-712), or Poseidon when he encourages Ajax and his brother (13.39-75). Athene also transforms herself into a bird (*Od.* 1.320; 3.371f.; 22.239), and gods may be identified with natural phenomena or stand for the realm that they represent: Scamander is a river but also a river-god who talks to Achilles (21.210ff.); Hephaestus is a major god, but he is also a

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burning fire (21.330ff.). Those who die on the battlefield are slain "by Ares" (e.g. 24.260). Homer's gods have a high degree of plasticity.

That gods determine the course of things in general is obvious. In the *Iliad*, "the will of Zeus was accomplished", as we learn in the initial summary (1.5). Achilles declares: "I will accept my own death, at whatever / time Zeus wishes to bring it about, and the other immortals" (18.115f.). In some instances, a god or the gods work together with *moira* ("fate", "lot", "portion"). Even Heracles had to die, for "his fate beat him under, and the wearisome anger of Hera" (18.119). At other times, fate alone will do: Hector remains outside the walls of Troy because "his deadly fate" held him shackled (22.5). A god may invest humans with special qualities, as Athene does when she grants Diomedes "strength and daring" (5.2) that sustain him for a long time in battle. Gods or a god may also be behind quite specific incidents. Sometimes, this seems hardly more than a manner of speaking, as in the case of poor Lycaon, who was captured by Achilles and then ransomed – "but on the twelfth day once again / the god cast him into the hands of Achilles" (21.46f.). Yet the gods are called for especially if an incident is significant or surprising. Athene persuades the bowman Pandarus to break the truce between the Achaeans and the Trojans by aiming an arrow at Menelaus, but "the blessed gods immortal did not forget you, / Menelaus, and first among them Zeus' daughter, the spoiler, / who standing in front of you fended aside the tearing arrow" (4.126-8). Athene follows up, for when Diomedes throws his spear at Pandarus, "Pallas Athene guided the weapon / to the nose next to the eye, and it cut on through the white teeth / and the tongue's base / so that the spearhead came out underneath the jawbone" (5.290-3). The gods provide an explanation for failure, but even more for success.

The most spectacular divine interventions are those that lead to things that realistically *could* not happen, especially if we think that it *should* not happen. Aphrodite's snatching away of Paris after the duel with Menelaus in Book 3 (369-82) is a case in point; another is Poseidon's snatching away of Aeneas after the confrontation with Achilles:

> but Aineias he lifted high from the ground, and slung him through the air
> so that many ranks of fighting men, many ranks of horses,
> were overvaulted by Aineias, hurled by the god's hand.
> He landed at the uttermost edge of the tossing battle
> (*Il.* 20.325-8)

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A little later, Athene is involved in the decisive duel between Achilles and Hector. As the two protagonists finally face each other, Athene goes up to Achilles and encourages him. She is confident "that you and I / will take back great glory to the ships of the Achaeans, after / we have killed Hector" (22.216-8). She announces that she will go up to Hector and persuade him to stand up to Achilles in combat. She assumes the guise of Hector's brother Deïphobus and fools the doomed hero into believing in victory. Athene's duplicity seems repugnant to many. She does not merely make Hector believe that his brother helps him, and then vanishes from the scene when help is needed; when Achilles fails to hit Hector with his spear, she "snatched it and gave it / back to Achilles, unseen by Hector shepherd of the people" (22.276f.). Hector realizes: "[no] use. Here at last the gods have summoned me deathward" (22.297). And in fact, Hector must die. Tradition requires it, and Zeus has – as an instrument, or controller, of fate (it is hard to tell who serves whom) – literally weighed the fates of the two heroes, "and Hector's death-day was heavier / and dragged downward toward death, and Phoibos Apollo forsook him" (22.212f.). Athene's involvement does not *decide* Hector's fate; it rather symbolizes the decision that has been taken, or the outcome required by tradition and plot.[27]

In the *Odyssey*, divine involvement is less varied.[28] Athene is the dominant divinity, acting almost like a guardian angel for Odysseus. At the assembly of the gods in Book 1, she initiates the process whereby Odysseus shall eventually return successfully to his kingdom. In Ithaca, she sets Telemachus in action mode on the quest for his father (Book 1), and when his stay in Sparta must end, she wakes him up and tells him to return home (15.1-42). She puts Odysseus in the picture when he wakes up at Ithaca (13.221ff.). She puts it into Penelope's mind to appear before the suitors in order to elicit gifts (18.158ff.), and turns Penelope's attention away as the astonished Eurycleia makes a great

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[27] Willcock 1970. On a lighter note, there is a similar episode during the funeral games for Patroclus: Apollo "dashed the shining whip" from Diomedes' hands (i.e., in human terms, Diomedes lost it), and Athene swept in and gave it back to him (which does not work in purely human terms: Diomedes could not have picked up the whip during the race). Diomedes is Athene's favorite; she also "inspired strength into his horses" and gave him the *kydos* of victory (see 23.312-400; for the horse-race as a whole and its aftermath, see 23.262-623).

[28] But the divine aspect is no less important, see Clay 1983, 133-239.

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noise with the washing basin (19.479). She also puts it into Penelope's mind to fetch the bow for the contest (21.1ff.), and she appears at a critical moment in the final battle against the suitors, "likening herself in voice and appearance to Mentor". Odysseus addresses her as Mentor and reminds "him" of the fact that they grew up together. In spite of Odysseus' words, however, the poet assures us that he "thought it was Athene, leader of armies" who stood before him (22.206-10). Here, as elsewhere in the *Odyssey*, the interplay between hero and goddess is subtle.

The versatile goddess turns up towards the very end of the poem, during the final confrontation between Odysseus, Telemachus, and old Laertes on one side, and the relatives of the dead suitors on the other. She again appears as Mentor, but puts her divine resources to use as she breathes "enormous strength" (24.520) into old Laertes, enabling him to throw his heavy spear and smash Eupeithes' helmet and his head. The ensuing battle would have ended in another massacre, had Athene not cried out loudly and ordered the relatives to stop (24.529-32). The reaction to her words shows that the goddess' voice has been heard, not that of old Mentor: "[so] spoke Athene, and the green fear took hold of them, / and in their terror they let fall from their hands their weapons, / which fell all on the ground at the cry of the goddess speaking" (24.533-5). She goes on to give some instructions to Odysseus, who happily obeys (24.547f.). Thus the poem ends.

The gods and their interactions with men are essential both to the action and to the atmosphere of the Homeric poems.

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2

RECURRENT CONCERNS AND TYPICAL SCENES IN THE *BOOK OF SONGS*

Wai-yee LI

Confucius is said to have summed up the *Book of Songs* with one phrase: "thoughts undeviating" (*Analects* 2.2).[1] Its status as a canonical classic prompts the search for unifying ideas and a consistent value system.[2] However, for a collection of poems whose origins, purposes, and contexts of utterance or performance are so varied, poems that span so many centuries and yield evidence of only intermittent cross-reference,[3] it is difficult to identify overarching themes and consistently pursued ideas. Instead, we have recurrent concerns linked to divergent developments and implications. There are obvious distributional patterns with respect to the conventional sub-divisions of the *Book of Songs* into "Airs of the Domains" (*Guofeng*), "Lesser Odes" (*Xiaoya*), "Greater Odes" (*Daya*), and "Hymns" (*Song*). For example, the vagaries of desire may be described as a recurrent concern only in the “Airs of the Domains,” although it also comes up in “Lesser Odes,” the celebration of amity and harmony through feasts appears most often in “Lesser Odes,” and the historical destiny of Zhou is a much more dominant issue in “Greater Odes” and “Hymns.” Since dramatic and narrative elements do not constitute the focus in the *Book of Songs*, a “typical scene” is less “a piece of action” than a setting and situation (e.g., parting, a homeward journey, the toil of public duty) evoking certain emotions.

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[1] The phrase (*si wu xie*) is found in a Lu hymn in the *Book of Songs* (Mao 297, line 31).

[2] See Yiqun Zhou's essay in this volume.

[3] Formulaic lines tend to be repeated in the same subsection, but there are exceptions. The "Airs of the Domains" and "Lesser Odes" share overlapping lines. See, for example, the lines from "Hempen Shoes" (Mao 107 "Guju") embedded in "Great East" (Mao 203 "Da dong"); the lines from "Cricket" (Mao 14 "Caochong") and "Seventh Month" (Mao 154 "Qiyue") included in "Send Out the Chariots" (Mao 168 "Chuju"); the lines from "Valley Wind" (Mao 35 "Gufeng") and "Joyous" (Mao 197 "Xiao pan") overlap. The exchange of peach and pear in "Vigilant" (Mao 256 "Yi") echoes that of quince and jade in "Quince" (Mao 64 "Mugua"). The formula of "I have not yet seen the noble man…/ Having seen the noble man" appears in different contexts in the "Lesser Odes" and "Airs of the Domains." Sometimes the same lines appear in "Greater Odes" and "Lesser Odes" (e.g., Mao 210, Mao 261).

Nature and Life Force

The *Book of Songs* is full of images of vibrant nature, whose relationship with human feelings and circumstances encompasses metaphor, metonymy, homology, and contrast. The much-discussed principle of “affective image” (*xing* 興)[4] often involves the use of the sights and sounds of nature in the beginnings of poems. What does the cry of the osprey on the river’s islet have to do with longing for the fair lady in “Ospreys” (Mao 1 “Guanju”)? How is the image of swift currents that would not carry bound firewood connected to military service or brotherhood in the two poems titled “Waters Tumultuous” (Mao 68, Mao 92, “Yang zhi shui”)?[5] The open-ended answer is supposedly embedded in the creative process itself, hence the mystique of the “affective image”: it is said to stir up or generate the poem by moving the speaker to articulate what follows; it is the very impetus for poetic creation.

Sometimes the implied comparison appears in the middle of the poem, as in these lines from “Banks of Ru” (Mao 10 “Rufen,” lines 9-12): “The bream has a red tail, / It’s as if the royal house is ablaze. / Even though it's like being ablaze, / Your father and mother are right here." The speaker of this poem is a woman walking along the banks of Ru and longing for her husband who is away toiling for affairs of the domain. Interpreters dispute the relationship between the bream and the "royal house ablaze." Does redness evoke the association? Is "redness" a result of toil reminding the wife of her husband's endeavors? Or is it a sign of indulgence implying that disorder in the realm is the result of decadence and tyranny? Is the speaker affirming or justifying the husband's service, or is she urging him to come home? Despite divergent perspectives, all agree on the metaphorical connection between the bream and the speaker's thoughts, emotions, and circumstances.

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[4] This follows Stephen Owen’s translation in *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought* (Owen 1992, 45).

[5] One may argue that the questions posed in Mao 68, wherein the speaker asks “why those fine men” are not joining him in garrisoning Shen, Fu, and Xu (lines 3-4, 9-10, 15-16), also link it to brotherhood and its absence or perils, the theme of Mao 92. Mao 116 has the same title but introduces a variation in the first two lines: “Waters tumultuous, / White stones washed clean.” I use the word “title” here just for the sake of convenience. Titles of poems in the *Book of Songs* are derived from their first lines to facilitate designation. All translations in this chapter are my own, unless otherwise stated.

There are examples of sympathetic resonance of nature and mood, as in the image of the "biting valley wind" in the abandoned woman's lament of loneliness and rancor in two poems with the title "Valley Wind" (Mao 35, 201 "Gufeng"). In "North Wind" (Mao 41 "Beifeng"), the cold north wind and drifting rain create an atmosphere of oppressive gloom as the speaker of the poem urges his or her companion to hurry on their journey. The sense of oppression lends some credence to the idea that the animals in the last stanza symbolize unjust rule: "There's nothing red that isn't a fox, / There's nothing black that isn't a crow" (lines 13-14).[6] Alternatively, there may be a contrast between inner state and the natural setting, as in these oft-cited lines from "Picking bracken" (Mao 167 "Caiwei"), in which a soldier, lamenting his service in incessant wars and prolonged absence from home, recalls his departure when nature was inviting and describes his return when it seems bleak: "Back then when I left, / The willows were lush and swaying. / Now I am coming back / As rain and snow fly, unyielding" (lines 41-44).[7]

Aside from ubiquitous scenes of "human being in nature" and images of sympathetic correspondence or dissonant juxtaposition, there are some poems that focus on domesticating nature. The Lu hymn

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[6] Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130-1200) claims that both the fox and the crow are "inauspicious creatures" that inspire dread (Zhu 2007, 31). The Mao commentary claims that the images imply erased distinctions as ruler and ministers share the same iniquities, see *Maoshi zhengyi*, 2C.104.

[7] Wang Fuzhi 王夫之 (1619-92) calls it "using a joyful scene to write about sadness and using a sad scene to write about joy to double the sadness and joy." See his *Shiyi* 詩譯 in *Jiangzhai shihua* 姜齋詩話 (Wang Fuzhi 1988, 15:809).

"Robust and Strong" (Mao 297 "Jiong") celebrates fifteen kinds of horses tamed and used in Lu and seems to be an implicit tribute to the reigning Lu ruler (Lord Xi, r. 659-627 BCE). The horses thrive because of men capable of "thoughts without boundaries," "thoughts without limits," "thoughts untiring," and "thoughts undeviating" (lines 7, 15, 23, 31). Possession of these stallions is praised as a marker of good governance. Similarly, in "Ding Star in the Middle of the Sky" (Mao 50 "Ding zhi fang zhong"), the Wei ruler (Lord Wen, r. 659-635 BCE) concludes his rebuilding of the Wei capital (in the aftermath of a disastrous defeat by the Di) with the breeding of horses: "Steadfast of heart, farseeing in planning: / Of imposing stallions and mares there are three thousand" (lines 20-21). The horses are here taken as a symbol of the domain's resurgence. Poems about agriculture and husbandry often confirm political order. "No Sheep" (Mao 190 "Wu yang") gives a loving description of thriving flocks of sheep and oxen and ends with the shepherd's dream: "The shepherd then had a dream: / Teeming were the fish, / Countless[8] the banners with eagles. / The diviner prognosticated. / Teeming were the fish: / This means a bountiful year. / Countless the banners with eagles: / A patrimony flourishes and multiplies" (lines 25-32). Banners with eagles appear in many poems about warfare. Husbandry and the celebration of nature's bounty are thus tied to state power.

Poems about agriculture, unlike those about herding, are more distinctively connected to ritual. The implied logic of the agrarian poems in the *Book of Songs* is distilled into its most basic formulation in the Zhou hymn "Bountiful Year" (Mao 279 "Fengnian"): Grains fill numberless barns; "Made into spirits, made into mead, / Offered to the ancestors and ancestresses: / They fulfill numerous rituals. / Blessings descend on all" (lines 4-7).[9] Likely performed as part of the harvest sacrifice, this simple hymn is both a supplication to the ancestors and a description of the ritual cycle—the ancestors nourish the land, which yields its bounty to feed the ancestors' spirits. The distinction between being part of the ritual performance or its description is not easy to make—a poem can encompass or move between these two poles. Direct supplication (something akin to a prayer for a good harvest) is relatively brief; much more detailed is the portrayal of agricultural activities, the fruit of labor, and various rituals meant to enable or celebrate the bounty of the land.

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[8] Following Yu Xingwu's 于省吾 interpretation (cited in *Shijing zhuxi*, 2:552), we read *zhao* 旐 (banners with the patterns of turtles and snakes) as *zhao* 兆 (numerous).

[9] The first three of these four lines also appear in "Begin Weeding" (Mao 290 "Zaishan").

Images of gestation and inevitable growth are linked to the Zhou ancestor Lord Millet (Hou Ji 后稷) in "Giving Birth to the People" (Mao 245 "Shengmin"), and to the flourishing of the Zhou people in "Spreading" (Mao 237 "Mian"). The latter uses the image of "spreading gourd vines" to describe the migration and settlement of the Zhou people led by Danfu, although its dominant images are not agricultural. "Giving Birth to the People" marks the seamless mergence of human procreation and the growth of crops and establishes the homology between agricultural labor and agricultural ritual. Jiang Yuan "gives birth" to the Zhou people because "she can offer sacrifices / To purge the scourge of being sonless" (lines 4-5). Her ritual expertise is echoed in the power of her son, Lord Millet, to establish the sacrifice to the gods with the bounty of the land that he cultivates—a sacrifice repeated and continued by his descendants, the people of Zhou. Jiang Yuan steps on the god's toe print and is "moved by joy" (*xin* 歆); the same word (*xin*) is used to describe the god's enjoyment of sacrifices offered by the Zhou people. Wen Yiduo 聞一多 (1899-1946) suggests that "stepping on the toe print" could have been part of the ritual dance in an agrarian sacrifice—a kind of ritual re-enactment of Zhou origins.[10] It is as if the ritual, validated through repetition, has come full circle. Jiang Yuan's fertility is thus interwoven with the fecundity of the land. The miraculous birth and resilience of Lord Millet remind us of the irrepressible life force embodied in the growth of a plant.[11] Jiang Yuan expects birth with rest and reverence, and for the birth "there was no tearing, no rending, / it was without hurt, without harm" (lines 13-14). She abandons the baby in narrow lanes, but oxen and sheep protect it.[12] She leaves it in the woods, but just then woodcutters come. She places it on cold ice, but birds cover it with wings. "Then the birds left, / And Lord Millet cried out loud" (lines 25-6). He cries, crawls, stands up, finds food, and grows myriad crops that are enumerated in loving detail (lines 29-55). The indestructible Lord Millet symbolizes the force of nature that a farmer would hope to claim for his crops. Such hopes are concretized in the sacrifice to the "god on high" (*shangdi* 上帝) and perhaps also Lord Millet. The washing and steaming of grains for the sacrifice are described with reiterative adjectives (*sousou* 叟叟, *fufu* 浮浮, lines 60-1) echoing those capturing the luxuriant growth of the crops (*peipei* 旆旆, *suisui* 穟穟, *mengmeng* 幪幪, *bengbeng* 唪唪, lines 33-6). The sacrifice is but the continuity and fruition of inevitable growth.

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[10] Cited in *Shijing zhuxi*, 2:801.

[11] See Owen 2000.

[12] The poem does not explain why this happens. In later traditions (e.g., Sima Qian's [ca. 145-ca 86 BCE] *Shiji* 4.111), Jiang Yuan abandons the baby because she fears its "inauspiciousness."

The growth of crops is associated with the elemental life force: "The seeds contain vibrant life."[13] "Stubbornly they burst forth from the land, / How forceful the first grown among them. / Endless are the blades, / Tireless the spears" ("Begin Weeding" [Mao 290 "Zaishan"], lines 15-18).[14] This vitality translates into sustenance for the people: sacrifice to the "god of fields" (*tianzu* 田祖) is to bring "sweet rain" that "will help our crops of millet" and "nourish our men and women" ("Great Fields" [Mao 211 "Futian"], lines 19-20). In addition, there are references to stored grains being taken out "to feed our farmers" ("Great Fields," line 4). Perhaps this explains also the recurrent references to the bearers of meals heading for the fields. There are gleanings even for poor widows: "The rain that falls on the lord's fields, / Also reaches to our private plots. / There the unharvested young husks, / Here the uncollected hay. / There the discarded bundle, / Here the remaining grains: / Such are the gleanings for the widows" ("Expansive Fields" [Mao 212, "Datian"], lines 19-25). The lord's fields (*gongtian* 公田) are what the farmers are obliged to till, but here bounty extends to their private plots (*sitian* 私田). The life force of growing grains is transformed into overflowing abundance for even the poor and dispossessed.

The obverse side of celebrating agriculture as beneficent abundance is social and political control. The rituals described in these poems often involve the king, either symbolically leading in agricultural activities (in the ritual of “bringing labor to the land” [*jitian* 籍田]) or exhorting his officials to mobilize farmers to attend to their tasks. In “Officials” (Mao 276 “Chengong”), it is the eponymous “officials” and “field officers” (*baojie* 保介) who are urged to oversee the farmers’ tasks. In “Great Fields,” the king (or an official) “summons our field officers for an audience” during his moment of repose (line 10), presumably to praise them for their successful supervision of diligent farmers. The idealized image of collective agricultural labor suggests that celebrating the bounty of the land is also the affirmation of social and political control. Through metaphorical and syntactical elision, tilling the land is tied to conquest and the expansion of political frontiers. Just like the legendary king Yu who opened up and managed (*dian* 甸) the Southern Mountain, the “descendant” *zeng sun* 曾孫 (i.e., the ruler and leader of the ritual) tills (*tian* 田) the fields in “Endless Southern Mountains” (Mao 210 “Xin Nanshan”).[15] Agriculture is the conduit linking the past and the future—agricultural ritual defines itself as confirmation and repetition of the historical memory of dominion, of “how it has always been so.”

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[13] This line appears in both "Begin Weeding" (line 14) and "Good Plows" (Mao 271 "Liangsi," line 4).

[14] Following Cheng Junying's reading of *biao* 麃 as *biao* 穮, *Shijing zhuxi*, 2:983. The Mao Commentary reads *biao* 麃 as *yun* 耘 or *biao* 穮, "to dig up the weeds" (*Maoshi zhengyi* 19D.748).

Agricultural ritual presents a beneficent nature (if nature is mentioned at all), as in the reference to the gentle rain that, “having soaked the earth abundantly, / let a hundred grains grow” (lines 11-12) in “Endless Southern Mountains.” In “Seventh Month” (Mao 154 “Qiyue”), however, we have “the flapping cold wind” (line 3) and “piercing chill” (line 4) of the winter months. Instead of abundance, farmers (“we”) speak of enduring hardships: “Shirtless and sockless, / How can we last to the year’s end?” (lines 5-6). This panoramic view of agrarian life has been read as a “realistic” depiction or as the realization of harmony between human endeavor and cosmic forces. It is hard to resist the temptation to construe a “class change” in perspective. Where “Great Fields” speaks of farmers being fed with stored grains, here “We pick bitter herbs and cut rotten trees for firewood / to nourish us farmers” (line 65-6). Bearers of meals to the fields in the ritual poems celebrate bounty; here, the speaker with his wife and children are the ones who bring the meals for the pleasure (or feeding) of the field officers (*tianjun* 田畯).[16] Nature is observed at close quarters and described through a litany of plants and insects. We see the receiving end of social control, as women weave and dye clothes for the "noble sons" or men hunt foxes to make cloaks for their betters. Building palaces and preparing ice become additional burdens in the seasonal cycle of agricultural labor. The idyllic scene of girls picking mulberries is punctuated by their fear of "being taken home by the noble sons" (line 22). "Seventh Month" also ends with a feast accompanied by rituals (on grounds cleaned by the implied speaker of the poem) celebrating amity and "boundless long life" (line 88). This may not be a conscious "view from below," but it is an unflinching description of the farmer's pleasures and hardships, and ritual does seem to emerge as a vision of harmony imposed on privations.

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[15] “The Southern Mountain stretches on, / Yu was the one who controlled it. / In the level fields in high land and low, / The descendant tills the land” (“Endless Southern Mountains,” lines 1-4). In bronze inscriptions, *dian* 甸 or *dianren* 甸人 means the officer managing land, and the word comes to mean land under the ruler’s control.

Heaven and humans: legitimation, accusations, and unanswerable questions

In "How Splendid" (Mao 275 "Si wen"), likely a hymn used in sacrificial ritual for the Zhou ancestor Lord Millet, his virtue and power are said to match heaven. It ends with the confirmation of Zhou sovereignty over the known world of civilization: "Do not be barred by this boundary or that limit, / But spread the constant principles to the whole realm" (lines 7-8). "Constant principles" (*chang* 常) probably refers to the cultivation of crops; the worship of Lord Millet and the agrarian way of life he embodies thus also legitimate the extension of Zhou rule. Likewise, in "Majesty" (Mao 294 "Huan"), a hymn for King Wu (r. ca. 1046-ca. 1043 BCE), the gift of "years of bountiful harvest" (line 2) is linked to "pacifying myriad realms" (line 1), evidence that "he never slackened when it came to Heaven's command" (line 3). In such poems, heaven's command is an inevitable corollary of the eulogistic mode.

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[16] The lines "They bring meals to the southern fields, / And the field officers are very pleased" appear in "Seventh Month" (Mao 154 "Qiyue," lines 10-11), "Great Fields" (Mao 211 "Futian," lines 23-4) and "Expansive Fields" (Mao 212 "Datian," lines 28-9).

Heaven's command, or mandate, is more self-consciously invoked when it comes to political legitimation. "Heaven's mandate is not constant" (line 34), as is proclaimed in "King Wen" (Mao 235 "Wen wang"), a poem recalling King Wen's glory and exemplarity for the edification of his descendants. It can be transferred and, in poems glorifying Zhou greatness, this explains why Zhou conquered Shang. In Shang hymns (probably created or transmitted in the domain of Song, which incorporated Shang descendants)[17] commemorating the rise of Shang, it describes how Shang toppled Xia. The idea serves the narrative of how erstwhile subjects become rulers. Thus, "King Wen" explains how the spirit of King Wen has risen and is now by the side of the god on high (line 8), and how such elevation is based on the transferal of heaven's mandate from Shang to Zhou: "Although Zhou is an ancient domain, / Its command is newly received" (lines 3-4)—"newness" here refers to a relatively recent past and also the constant renewal of heaven's mandate. Before Shang lost its people, it too "sufficed to be a match for the god on high" (line 46). Hence, the vanquished preserve the dignity of their ceremonial raiment and participate in the ritual of libation (*guan* 祼) to offer sacrifices to Zhou ancestors (lines 35-8). Rehearsing how the Zhou conquest of Shang was decreed by heaven, the speaker of "King Wen" invokes the fall of Shang (also called Yin)[18] as a warning for King Wen's descendants. Later Zhou kings can reflect on the precariousness of heaven's mandate: "You should take Yin as mirror, / The great command does not come by easily" (lines 47-8).

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[17] According to Sima Qian, "At the time of Lord Xiang (of Song), he wanted to become the covenant leader by cultivating humaneness and duty. His high officer Zheng Kaofu praised him. Hence he reached back to tell of the wherewithal of the rise of Yin (Shang) through Qi, Tang, Gaozong, and created the Shang Hymns" (*Shiji* 38.1633). Qi, Tang, and Gaozong (Wuding) were Shang kings. There are chronological discrepancies here: Zheng Kaofu, said to be Confucius's ancestor, served Song rulers in the eighth century BCE, while Lord Xiang ruled from 650-637 BCE. Cf. Wang Guowei 王國維 (1877-1927): "Shang hymns were created during the Zhou dynasty by the men of Song to offer sacrifices to their former kings," (Wang Guowei 1980, 2:105).

[18] Pangeng, the nineteenth Shang king, is said to have moved his capital to Yin, where he and his descendants ruled until the Zhou conquest of Shang in the mid eleventh century BCE (Chang 1980, 69; Keightley 1999, 233).

Poems about historical destiny in the *Book of Songs* often simply glorify or legitimate the powers that be. Many are sung or performed to praise the virtuous ancestors of Zhou. Heaven, or the god on high, appears as the agent conferring the command to rule. The content of this command or mandate (*ming* 命) is sometimes conveyed through direct speech. In "Glorious" (Mao 241 "Huangyi"), the god on high speaks to King Wen: "I turn to the one with bright virtue. / He does not set store by sounds and colors, / Nor does he extol grandeur and change. / Not making fine distinctions, not knowing, / He follows the rules of the god on high" (lines 74-8). Just like "affairs of heaven" that are "without sounds or smells" (Mao 235, lines 53-4), the idealized king does not actively intervene, acting almost like a conduit for the will of heaven: "With the help of numerous splendid men, / King Wen achieves peace" (Mao 235, lines 23-4).[19] Indeed, Zhou rulers in these poems seem to exercise authority by "being" rather than "acting." As with the god on high, they are most often linked to verbs of observation, looking, surveying (*lin* 臨, *jian* 監, *juan* 眷, *guan* 觀, *xing* 省, *xiang* 相, *xu* 胥, *zhan* 瞻) and deliberation (*jiu* 究, *duo* 度).

Heaven's command justifies Zhou rise to power, yet there is no interest in depicting its realization on the battlefield. Scholars group "Giving Birth to a People," "Lord Liu" (Mao 250 "Gong Liu"), "Spreading," "Glorious" (Mao 241 "Huang yi"), and "Great Brightness" (Mao 236 "Daming") as a cluster of poems devoted to the founding and victories of Zhou,[20] but the attention to military prowess and warfare in these works is merely intermittent. Instead, heaven's mandate is realized through the institution of ritual, the celebration of settlement and construction, and the implied homology or continuity between heaven's command and royal command. The heroes are instigators of sacrifices, builders, and commanders; their role as warriors is not emphasized. As noted above, "Giving Birth to a People," for example, establishes Lord Millet as some sort of agricultural deity who initiates the sacrifice (*zhaosi* 肇祀) for the bounty of the land. Instead of conquest, poems like "Lord Liu" and "Spreading" chart the movement of the Zhou people (from Tai to Bin, and from Bin to Mount Qi), and celebrate their settlement in what is presented as unclaimed land. In "Lord Liu," for example, the Zhou leader is "honest and steadfast" (lines 1, 11, 21, 31, 41, 51). His group is militarized as they set out on their journey—"bows and arrows were ready" (line 8), "Shields, halberds, and dagger-axes were raised" (line 9)—and Lord Liu himself sports a sword in "jewel-encrusted sheath" (line 20) while arranging "an army in three shifts" (line 46), yet military readiness does not lead up to battle scenes. The only meaningful action preceding settlement is visual encounter (*gou* 覯), as Lord Liu ascends the heights to survey the land, defining boundaries and setting the course of building and settlement (lines 22-5). Later sources link Lord Liu's journey with military confrontation with the Di (identified as a non-Sinitic "barbarian" group), but the poem gives no such clues.

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[19] These are among the most frequently cited lines in Warring States Masters literature, which extols advisors capable of wise counsel and skillful remonstrance.

[20] On the basis of such concerns, Feng Yuanjun and Lu Kanru, in the first attempt to retell the history of Chinese poetry (1931), characterizes these poems as "epic" in aspiration if not in form (Feng and Lu 1996). Cf. Wang 1974.

Likewise, later sources claim that Danfu, one of the Zhou ancestors, moved from Bin to Mount Qi to flee Di aggression.[21] By contrast, "Spreading" bypasses conflicts and focuses on Danfu's assessment of the site for settlement, his extension and management of land boundaries, and the construction of palaces, temples, city gates, and platforms for offering sacrifices. There is a veritable "poetics of construction" as the description of the collective labor in building unfolds: measuring ropes are pulled taut, planks are set up, the thud of earth as it is leveled, pounded, and shoveled is captured with attentive onomatopoeia (lines 25-40). Displacement of other peoples and possible conflicts appear at the fringes as the inevitable, almost incidental, consequence of settlement. "They thus built the great platform for sacrifice, / The Rong and other barbarians all went on their way" (lines 41-2). "The oaks and thorny shrubs are cleared, / and the road is wide open. / The Kunyi, startled, took flight, / How dreary their plight was!" (lines 45-8).

Heaven's direct articulation of its command in "Glorious" also dispenses with the need to depict the steps towards victory: "The god on high transferred its bright virtue, / And the Kunyi was destroyed" (lines 21-2). Indeed, the god on high behaves very much like Zhou leaders in this poem: he surveys, deliberates, and settles down. The acts of looking and stopping attributed to the god on high confirm heaven's mandate for Zhou: "He thus turned back and looked westward: / This is where I will make my abode" (lines 11-12). As with other poems on the great historical destiny of Zhou, the conquest of nature (the pruning and clearing of vegetation) is described in greater detail than warfare. The conquest of Chong, decreed by the god on high, is dignified by the scale of confrontation, but we move swiftly from the powerful besieging chariots and high, imposing city walls to captives streaming in (*lianlian* 連連) and the left ears of dead enemy soldiers being cut down in an unhurried fashion (*anan* 安安) (lines 85-8). The preparation and the aftermath seem to matter more than the process of conquest. After the battle is won, sacrifices are offered, the vanquished are pacified, and Zhou gains new respect from its neighbors (lines 89-96).

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[21] *Shiji* 4.113-14.

"Great Brightness" culminates in Zhou victory over Shang, but more space is devoted to the marriages of the early Zhou kings, King Wen and King Wu, to women from areas outside Zhou control (lines 7-14, 23-40). (Wang Ji's mother Tai Ren was from Zhi; she gave birth to King Wen, who married Tai Si from Shen. Tai Si became the mother of King Wu. Zhi is identified as a domain subservient to Shang, and Shen may be descended from Xia.[22] The marriages thus facilitate Zhou alliance with diverse groups.) Marriages feature recurrently in poems about military confrontation, perhaps in tacit recognition that marriage alliances were integral to diplomacy and the balance of power at stake in warfare. "Great Brightness" ends with King Wen exhorting his soldiers to remain loyal on the eve of the battle of Muye, the decisive confrontation in the Zhou conquest of Shang. The battle itself is passed over in silence. The endless expanse of Muye, the sandalwood chariot, the robust horses, and the Zhou minister Lü Xiang, "fiercely soaring like a hawk" (line 53) are all the details we have of the battle (lines 49-53). "Swiftly they attacked the great Shang, / and on the morrow there was great brightness" (lines 55-6). This is the prevailing pattern of battle poems in the *Book of Songs*: there is extensive description of the might of the victor (which is sometimes compared to thunder, raging rivers, or luxuriant mountains, as in "Picking White Millet" [Mao 178 "Caiqi"] and "Constant Martial Endeavor" [Mao 263 "Changwu"]), the preparation for war, and references to the outcome of the conflict and the post-war celebration, but the fighting itself is passed over quickly or in silence.[23]

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[22] On the possible link between Shen and Xia, see Jiang 1985.

What are the marks of destiny? In some war poems, the resplendent virtue of Zhou is manifested in lavish descriptions of the paraphernalia of horses, chariots, weapons, banners, or martial garb (e.g., "Picking White Millet"). Litanies of things also appear in descriptions of investiture—the king's gifts to lords and commanders are enumerated to mark the momentousness of their appointment as commanders or administrators. The social manifestation of heaven's mandate is the feast, celebrated in about twenty poems in the *Book of Songs*. Ritual has a social dimension.[24] In "Having Made Us Inebriated" (Mao 247 "Jizui"), the invocator (*zhu* 祝) speaks on behalf of the personator (who represents the ancestor's spirit) to confer blessing on the Zhou king offering sacrifice. The ancestor's enjoyment of the food and drinks of the sacrificial ritual is confirmed in the amity of the participants "assisting in the process with the dignity of deportment" (line 16). Ritual is incorporated into court feasts, as shown in the ceremonies of offering and accepting toasts, and the ritualized archery contest (lines 9-12, 17-24) in "Reeds by the Road" (Mao 246 "Xingwei"). Other feast poems have a primarily human and social focus, although the celebration of kinship and friendship in feasts also realizes divine favor: "The gods hear of this, / And there is peace in addition to harmony" ("Cutting Wood" [Mao 165 "Famu"], lines 11-12).

Kinship cohesion is necessary for fending off external threats; such is the subtext in the celebration of a harmonious feast in "Pear Tree" (Mao 164 "Tangdi").[25] In that sense, social cohesion is aligned with political will. A recurrent refrain in the *Book of Songs* is "the king's command" (*wangming* 王命), which parallels heaven's command in aligning political moves with moral superiority. More than heaven's command, the king's command emphasizes continuity with past greatness. In "Rivers Jiang and Han" (Mao 262 "Jiang Han"), for example, King Xuan (r. 827-782 BCE) exhorts his minister Shao Hu to follow the example of his ancestor Duke Shao, who was the "veritable pillar" when "Kings Wen and Wu received heaven's mandate" (lines 27-8). Scholars have noted that the diction of "Rivers Jiang and Han" resembles bronze inscriptions that typically chronicle gifts, accomplishments, royal commands, and the casters' protestations of loyalty.[26]

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[23] C. H. Wang characterizes this as "the ellipsis of battle" (Wang 1975). Keightley discusses this phenomenon in his comparison of Homeric and early Chinese heroic types, see Keightley 2014, 253-81.

[24] See Zhou 2010.

[25] Yang Shuda 楊樹達 links this poem to Shao Hu's bronze inscription and King Xuan's attempt to rally support for the Zhou house (*Jinweiju jinwen shuo* 積微居金文說), cited in Han 2011, 156.

The rhetoric of heaven's mandate may mask weakness and uncertainty. Such is the case with the poems extolling the achievements of King Xuan. As the son and the father of two disastrous rulers (King Li [r. ca. 877-841 BCE] and King You [r. 782-771 BCE]), King Xuan is supposed to have led an interregnum of dynastic revival. However, the poems praising his military achievements and offering grand descriptions of the dignity and might of the Zhou army (Mao 168, 177, 178, 262, 263) also contain details that suggest a more precarious and embattled situation for Zhou.[27] In "Sixth Month" (Mao 177 "Liuyue"), for example, the commander Yin Jifu is praised for his expeditions against the Xianyun, traditionally identified as barbarians.[28] "Disquiet in the tumult in the sixth month: / The chariots of war are already in order. / Our four steeds are strong and stalwart, / Our carts bear the customary gear of war. / The might of the Xianyun is blazing, / That's why we feel the urgency. / By the king's command we go to battle / To save the king's realm" (lines 1-8). Various place names in the poem suggest that the Xianyun's incursions penetrate deeply into the Zhou domain. Instead of acknowledging this as a defensive campaign, however, the poem celebrates Zhou power, evident in its very insignia: "Patterns of birds are emblazoned on banners, / Silken streamers brightly shine. / Ten charging war chariots: / A spearhead prying open the enemy's ranks" (lines 29-32). Despite the implied violence, the emphasis is on exemplary and orderly display based on perfect training. The hero of this ode is the Zhou leader Yin Jifu: "Cultured and martial is Jifu, / The exemplar for myriad domains" (lines 39-40).[29]

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[26] See comments by Zhu Xi, Fang Yurun 方玉潤 (1811-83), and Guo Moruo 郭沫若 (1892-1978), quoted in *Shijing zhuxi*, 2:910. On the relationship between early tetrasyllabic poetry and bronze inscriptions, see Chen 2012, 1-64.

[27] Besides "Sixth Month," see also "Picking White Millet" (Mao 178 "Caiqi"), "Send out the Chariots" (Mao 168 "Chuche"), "Rivers Jiang and Han" (Mao 262 "Jiang Han"), "Constant Martial Endeavor" (Mao 263 "Changwu").

[28] Sima Qian identifies the Xianyun as one of the ancestors of the Xiongnu (*Shiji* 110.2879). Liu Xin also claims that the Xianyun and the Xiongnu shared the same lineage (cited in *Hanshu* 73.3125).

The sense of conscious exaggeration of Zhou greatness sometimes involves a new focus on the creator of the poem. In "Highest" (Mao 259 "Song gao"), King Xuan sends his uncle, Shen Bo, to go to Xie, where he is to be "an example in the south" (lines 12). The model is supposedly early Zhou order, whereby fiefdoms put in power by Zhou kings defend the realm against invaders and barbarians. Ironically, Shen Bo himself comes from the ranks of Rong barbarians. The king apportions duties to Shen Bo, Shao Hu, and Jifu. Royal commands, echoing heaven's commands, are captured in the words of Jifu: "Jifu made this song, / A poem very grand. / Its music, so lovely, / Is to be given to Shen Bo" (lines 61-4). Likewise, "The Multitudes" (Mao 260 "Zheng min") praises King Xuan's minister Zhong Shanfu as the embodiment of Zhou's great destiny and ends with a version of "authorship": "Jifu made this song: / Calm and gentle like pure breeze. / May Zhong Shanfu think of this often / As something to salve his heart" (lines 61-4).[30] In both cases the act of making the poem that is self-consciously rehearsed as conclusion reminds the reader that claims of grandiosity may just be determined by the context of utterance. Beecroft suggests that the comparative richness of historical records in Yin Jifu's period (King Xuan's reign) implies that self-identification as author may be rooted in a more general self-consciousness about the necessity of keeping records or marking one's place in the memory of future generations.[31] Another possible explanation is that the sense of conscious exaggeration of Zhou greatness in the poems linked to King

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[29] Jifu is further identified as the "author" of four other odes in the Mao Commentary: "Highest" (Mao 259 "Songgao"), "The Multitudes" (Mao 260 "Zhengmin"), "The Lofty Han" (Mao 261 "Hanyi"), "Rivers Jiang and Han" (Mao 262 "Jiang Han"), see *Maoshi zhengyi*, 18C.669, 18C.674, 18D.679, 18D.684. The modern editors Cheng Junying and Jiang Jianyuan agree with the attribution in Mao 259 and 260 (*Shijing zhuxi*, 2:889, 895).

[30] The word *zuo* 作 (to make, to compose) may not be self-referential—i.e., Jifu's composition can be an event described in the poem rather than a statement of authorship. It is also possible that the meanings of *zuo* encompass "to perform" and "to sing" (Li 2017).

[31] Beecroft 2014; cf. Beecroft 2010.

Xuan's reign might also have resulted in a sharper focus on their creators as conscious fabricators of momentous destiny.[32]

In several other instances in the *Book of Songs*, the act of making the poem is rooted in the context of Zhou decline and disintegration. In "The Southern Mountain is High" (Mao 191 "Jie Nanshan"), for example, the speaker directs his barbs against the head of the Yin lineage, whom he harangues by juxtaposing his failings with the ideals embodied by his office. The speaker's rancor extends to heaven: "Merciless is high heaven, / there is no stop to chaos…. / Ride those four stallions, / The stallions thick-necked and strong. / I look to the four directions: / Entrapped, there is nowhere I can gallop" (lines 41-2, 49-52). In the concluding lines, the speaker presents his poem as a remonstrance: "Jiafu composed the song / To probe what sickens the realm. / Change your heart / And bring solace to the myriad realms" (lines 61-4).[33]

Remonstrance often summons a vision of disorder that questions "heaven's command" but also implicitly hopes for its rectification and justification. In "August" (Mao 255 "Dang"), for example, the speaker posits a heaven whose faithlessness is reflected in the ruler's errant course, which means that good government can restore the justice of heaven's command: "Heaven gives birth to the multitudes, / But its command lacks good faith. / There is none who does not have a good beginning, / Rarely does that succeed as a good end" (lines 5-8). The faithlessness of heaven and human failures are thus intertwined. "August" is presented as King Wen's harangue of the last Shang king, although many commentators believe that this is directed against the troubled reign of King Li of Zhou (r. 877-841 BCE). The analogy is confirmed in the concluding image of the mirror: "The mirror for Yin (Shang) is not far off: / It is to be found in the age of the last Xia ruler" (lines 63-4). If the last Shang king should heed the dire example of the last Xia king, so should the reigning Zhou ruler see his own failures mirrored in the fall of Shang. Remonstrance is premised on the possibility of correction—in the harangue, heaven is sometimes conniving and sometimes unforgiving, but the message for the implied audience is that just rule can remake heaven's command.

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[32] Li 2017, 372.

[33] Several other poems of remonstrance involve the speaker marking his "authorial intention" or naming himself, see "What Sort of Person" (Mao 199 "He ren si"), "Elder of Xiang" (Mao 200 "Xiang bo"), "Soft Mulberry" (Mao 257 "Sang rou"). Some scholars identify Mao 191 as a turning point in Zhou decline, see, e.g., Zhang 2004, 189-95.

Remonstrance poems present heaven's imminent fury as a rebuke of human negligence and oblivion. "Deviant" (Mao 254 "Ban"), for example, uses this as a formula: "heaven is about to inflict disasters" (line 9), "about to stir up disorder" (line 11), "about to unleash violence" (line 25), "about to burst forth in anger" (line 33), even as ruler and ministers fail to heed impending doom. Zhou decline also provokes many poems lamenting heaven's injustice. In "River of Heaven" (Mao 258 "Yun Han"), a king affirms his ritual observance and blames heaven as his realm suffers a devastating drought. "Above and below, offerings displayed and buried: / There is no god that we do not honor. / But Lord Millet fails to prevail, / and the god on high does not come" (lines 15-18). "Of the commoners left in Zhou, / There are not too many. / Heaven and high gods above / Have not left me any" (lines 25-8). The king is traditionally identified as King Xuan of Zhou, and commentators describe this as his "prayer for rain." But if it is a prayer, it is far from supplicatory. On the contrary, the tone is accusatory as the king questions heaven and implicitly charges it with injustice. The poem may be more a mixture of self-justification (i.e., the drought is not to be regarded as a mark of the king's lack of virtue) and appeal for help: "High officers and noble men: / Pray with no self-interest. / The great command is close to its end, / Do not abandon what you have accomplished" (lines 73-6). What is translated as "great command" here also means "allotted span." The king may be using the specter of their collective demise or heaven's prospective withdrawal of its mandate to urge intervention. He may be trying to convince his ministers and officers to give up some of their private resources for the succor of the realm. Whatever the case, references to heaven's justice or its injustice shape the discourse of political decline and might have served the purpose of political persuasion.

Some poems develop personal perspectives on historical destiny and heaven's mandate to rule. In "When the Sun and the Moon Meet in the Tenth Month" (Mao 193 "Shiyue zhi jiao"), the speaker in the poem describes anomalies that are believed to portend or reflect political disorder, including lunar and solar eclipses and earthquakes: "A hundred rivers roil and overflow, / Mountain peaks crash and collapse. / High embankments become valleys, / Deep valleys become mountains" (lines 19-22). The almost apocalyptic sense of doom is also particularized as the power wielded by the queen (Bao Si, consort of King You of Zhou [r. 781-771 BCE]) and seven officials, one of whom (Huangfu) misuses corvée labor for building his own settlement and also encroaches upon the poetic speaker's property (lines 25-48). Personal grievance is thus enmeshed with deliberations on political decline: "Heaven's command is deviant, / I do not dare follow my friends' example of ease and leisure" (lines 63-4). The term "friends" refers to the seven powerful officials; their sense of ease reflects heaven's perversity. The speaker presents his own vigilance as the proper response to dynastic crisis. In "First Month" (Mao 192 "Zhengyue"), which also mourns the decline and fall of Zhou (and like "When the Sun and the Moon Meet in the Tenth Month," singles out the queen Bao Si for blame), heaven takes on the malice and perversity of slander-mongers: "Heaven batters me, / As if it could not wait to overcome me" (lines 51-2).

Tropes of accusing heaven or questioning heaven surface not only in visions of decline and fall; they are also woven into a grand narrative of victory and historical destiny fulfilled. In "Broken Axe" (Mao 157 "Pofu"), a soldier, glad to be returning home at last, draws on the contrast between the glory of the Zhou Duke's military expedition ("The Zhou Duke led the eastward expedition / To bring order to domains in the four directions," lines 3-4) and the lamentable fate of soldiers who are just glad to have survived ("Pity the lot of those like us / Who are already the lucky ones," lines 5-6). "Send out the Chariot" celebrates how "The Son of Heaven commanded me / To fortify the walls in the north. / The illustrious Nan Zhong / Drives out the Xiangyun barbarians" (lines 21-4). But the paraphernalia of military might is juxtaposed with deep disquiet: "Set up these standards with turtle-snake patterns, / Raise those banners with ox-tails. / Such banners with patterns of eagle and turtle-snake—/ why do they not flutter? / I am heartsick with sorrow, / And the groom is also careworn" (lines 11-16). Nan Zhong's victory is thus interwoven with the poetic speaker's longing for home, which is conveyed through images of the world he is forced to leave behind because of the military expedition. One scene seems to be imagined or remembered from his wife's perspective: "Before I saw the fine man, / My heart was laden with worries. / Now that I have seen the fine man, / My heart is at peace" (lines 35-8). "Picking Bracken" is even more focused on the longing for home and the hardships of warfare, although it too dwells on the splendor of the chariot, the team of horses, and the military accouterment (ivory-decorated bows, fish-patterned quiver, line 38), alludes to three victories over the Xiangyun in one month (line 32), and accepts the necessity of the campaign, inasmuch as the Xiangyun is the very real culprit that "does away with home and abode" (line 5).

Both "Send Out the Chariot" and "Picking Bracken" refer to "the king's affairs" (*wangshi* 王事), a term that comes up in five other poems. "There is no respite to the king's affairs" is a common refrain, sometimes suggesting a conflict between public duty and private attachments. In addition to numerous poems about the soldier's travails no matter how just the campaign is supposed to be (and often there is no reference to the justification of the campaign at all and no hint of heroism or martial glory), there are also more mundane but no less urgent plaints from officers that call heaven into question, as in "North Gate" (Mao 40 "Beimen"): "The king's affairs are thrown my way, / Matters of government are piled upon me. / I come in from outside, / And my family take turns to harangue me. / Have done! / It is heaven that does it, / What is there to be said!" (lines 8-14). At the other end of the spectrum, all-encompassing declarations like "Heaven's command is not constant" or "Heaven's command will not come again" are thus personal invocations of heaven, often in a questioning or accusatory tone.

In many cases, the poetic speaker questions heaven or accuses it of blindness when he or she suffers loss, frustration, and disappointment. Sometimes, invoking heaven is a mode of lamentation specifically addressing the gap between self and society, as in these repeated lines in "Millet" (Mao 65 "Shuli"): "Those who know me, / Say that I am heartsick. / Those who do not know me / ask what I am seeking. / Blue heaven yonder—/ What sort of persons are they!" (lines 5-8, 13-16, 21-4). "Millet" is received in the tradition as a poem about decline and fall. Commentators believe that the poetic speaker is a Zhou official witnessing how Zhou is weathering a political crisis. His state of being "heartsick" is thus grounded in political despair. There are no conclusive internal clues supporting this reading, and such persistent interpretive habit reminds us how personal destiny and historical destiny are often regarded as inseparable.

Desire and order

The sense of frustration in “Millet” is, in a sense, typical. The word “heart” (*xin* 心) is often mentioned in connection with feelings like grief, sorrow, anxiety, and despair in the *Book of Songs*. The conditions for denying or fulfilling emotional needs constitute a recurrent concern, as with the soldiers' longing for home, discussed above. One such context is marriage, which encompasses political, social, and personal dimensions. As mentioned above, the consolidation of Zhou rule is celebrated with reference to marriage alliances with lineages related to Shang and Xia. The wives of early Zhou leaders are also praised in “Reverential” (Mao 240 “Sizhai”), which presents marriage as the core of socio-political order: “A model he is for his wife / As well as for his brothers: / By that he governs the clan and the realm” (lines 10-12). Likewise, in “The Lofty Han,” the praise of the Lord of Han as a great commander is confirmed through gifts from the Zhou king as well as a grand marriage with a minister’s daughter. The bride is welcomed with “carriages drawn by a hundred teams of horses, / As eight sets of bells tinkled” (lines 42-3). Some marriage poems implicitly celebrate political cohesion—“How Magnificent” (Mao 24 “He bi nong yi”), for example, seems to be a simple paean to the beauty of the bride, her distinguished lineage (as King Ping’s granddaughter and child of the Qi lord, lines 7-8), and her magnificent carriage (“How can it fail to be solemn and dignified?” line 3), but the subtext is how such a marriage would strengthen ties between the bride’s natal domain and the one into which she marries. Marriage naturalizes socio-political order. On the imagistic level, this means bringing together images from nature with the markers of power, as in “Magpie’s Nest” (Mao 12 “Quechao”), probably an epithalamium: “The magpie has a nest, / The cuckoo stays in it. / This girl is going to her mate’s home: / A hundred carriages welcome her” (lines 1-4). The numerous carriages mark the importance of the lineages; the union of these powerful lines is compared to the cuckoo taking its proper place in the magpie’s nest.[34]

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[34] Later idiomatic usage turns the image of “the cuckoo taking over the magpie’s nest” (*que chao jiu zhan* 鵲巢鳩佔) into a metaphor for usurpation or intrusion, but there is little doubt that in its *locus classicus* the image is a metaphor for the bride entering her new home; it has no negative meanings.

The balance between desire and order underlies many poems on marriage. Confucius is said to comment on the first poem in the collection, "The Ospreys," a celebration of longing and union: "'The Ospreys' is joyous without being licentious, melancholy without being injurious" (*Analects* 3.20). The Mao commentary speaks of "the virtue of consorts" and Zhu Xi emphasizes the decorum and moral suasion embodied by a royal couple,[35] while popular modern readings often identify it as a "love song" about how "sleeping, waking, I seek her" (line 8). Desire in the poem ("I seek her and cannot have her, / Waking and sleeping I long for her. / With endless longing, endless longing / I toss and turn" [lines 9-12]) culminates in the vision, or reality, of pleasing the fair lady with "horizontal lute and zither," as well as "bells and drums" in a kind of "musical union." The musical entertainment suggests a wedding, and this poem has been read as an epithalamium. Even if the musical entertainment is merely imagined, the logic of conjoining intense emotions and harmonious and ritually proper union remains. In this sense, containment (or damage control) is not merely the invention of the exegetical tradition. This is one of many poems in the collection upholding modes of socio-political order that encompasses pleasures and emotions. Poems celebrating weddings follow this pattern.

"The Ospreys" repeatedly (with variations of one word) depicts the lady "picking from right and left / the uneven water mallow" (lines 5-6, 13-14, 17-18). Commentators have suggested that the water mallow is used for sacrifice to augment the image of her "virtue" or contribution to ritual order. While the link cannot be ascertained in "The Ospreys," and "picking (a plant)," being one of the most frequently depicted actions in the *Book of Songs*, seems to have multiple associations, women's role in ritual preparations is taken up in a number of poems. In "Picking Clover-fern" (Mao 15 "Caiping"), it is "the reverent young woman" (line 12) who picks the clover-fern and lemna, boils them, and offers them as sacrifice "beneath the window of the ancestral temple" (line 10)—the grace of her movement emblematizes ritual propriety. Likewise, in "Picking Artemisia" (Mao 13 "Caifan"), the lady picks artemisia to be used for "the affairs of lords and princes" (line 4) at "the temple of lords and princes" (line 8). Most scholars agree that

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[35] *Maoshi zhengyi*, 1A.12; Zhu Xi 2007, 1-3. There is also a late Warring States tradition of reading "The Ospreys" as the product of Zhou decline, which Sima Qian adopts in *Shiji* (14.509, 121.3115).

"affairs" here refers to sacrifices—the lady in the poem gathers humble plants to be prepared for an august ritual that will take place in the ancestral hall or temple, and she does so with dignity and assiduity. Some commentators aver that the poem is about female silkworm workers because artemisia leaves are used to feed silkworms. Such a "class change" is not too likely, considering the headdress (a kind of wig) of the lady: "With her hairpiece piled high, / Day and night she is at the lord's hall. / With her hairpiece resplendent, / She slowly makes her way home" (lines 9-12). Again, a beautiful and dignified spectacle (symbolized by her hairpiece) adds to the sensual appeal of ritual order. Perhaps the line between productive labor and ritual is not so clearly drawn—we can imagine ritualized labor and labor enshrined as endemic to ritual, for example. Even aristocratic women are portrayed as working. In "Spreading Hemp" (Mao 2 "Ge tan"), a woman (presumably of high status because she speaks to her "instructress") makes and washes her own clothes in preparation for a visit to her natal family (lines 13-18). Both ritual and productive labor establish women's role in the well-being of the clan, and turn marriage into the linchpin of socio-political order.

Women who enter into marriages cementing political alliances also leave their natal domains: "A woman goes away to be married, / Leaving in the distance parents and siblings."[36] In "Water of the Spring" (Mao 39 "Quanshui"), a lady from Wei confers with the women who "follow her in marriage" (as secondary wives) and imagines a homeward journey: "Swiftly we would arrive at Wei: / How could there be any harm?" (lines 17-18). The slightly anxious tone in the last line hints at the impropriety of an actual return to Wei, and this is echoed in the expression of longing in the last stanza, which concludes with a sense of muted reconciliation: "I take the carriage and go roaming / To pour forth my sorrow" (lines 23-4). These last two lines also appear in "Bamboo" (Mao 59 "Zhugan," lines 15-16), which is again about a married Wei lady longing for her natal domain. "Roaming" (*you* 遊), in such cases, suggests a short excursion, a faint echo of the homeward journey imagined by the female speakers of the poems.

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[36] These lines appear in "Water of the Spring"(Mao 39 "Quanshui," lines 9-10), "Rainbow" (Mao 51 "Didong," lines 3-4), and "Bamboo" (Mao 59 "Zhugan," lines 7-8).

A married woman longing to return to her natal domain conveys implicit discontent, which is overtly politicized in "Gallop" (Mao 54 "Zaichi"), traditionally attributed to Lady Mu of Xu, wife of Lord Mu of Xu (r. 697-659 BCE) and daughter of Lord Yi of Wei (r. 668-660 BCE). According to *Zuozhuan* (Min 2, 660 BCE), Lord Yi of Wei undermines his legitimacy because of a strange obsession with cranes, which leads to his death and the destruction of Wei by the Di barbarians.[37] Lady Mu of Xu is said to have composed (or chanted) "Gallop" in this context: going against the counsel of the leaders in her husband's domain, she tries to come to the succor of her natal domain. Other sources claim that she tries to revive Wei's fortunes by seeking help from Wei's powerful neighbor Qi. Various details in "Gallop" seem to confirm this plot line. The poetic speaker "returns to offer condolence to the Wei lord"[38] (line 2) and hopes to "seek redress from a great domain" (line 23), and she seems to be acting against Xu leaders who try to dissuade her from going to Wei and Qi: "Since you do not approve of me, / I cannot turn back. / Seeing how you lack judgment, / How can my thoughts not reach far?"[39] (lines 11-14). She defends her decision and berates Xu leaders who oppose her return to Wei as "a crowd childish and obdurate" (lines 20). "High officers and noble men, / Do not hold me at fault. / Your many deliberations / Do not measure up to where I am heading" (lines 25-8). Even if we discount the attribution to Lady Mu or the context of crisis in Wei, the tone is distinctly oppositional. This is a woman intent on returning to her natal domain and ready to defy criticism from the leaders of the domain into which she marries. In early Chinese historical writings, this kind of conflict or divided loyalty is usually presented with implicit or explicit castigation of the woman as the destabilizing agent,[40] but here the woman's perspective engages our sympathy.

More threatening to socio-political order than women of potentially divided loyalty are those guilty of sexual transgression. A number of poems traditionally interpreted as "pointedly critical" (*ci* 刺) deal with the perversion of a ruler's marriage. The adulterous and incestuous relationship between Lord Xiang of Qi (d. 686 BCE) and his own sister, Wen Jiang, married to Lord Huan of Lu (r. 711-694 BCE), is said to be the subject of "Southern Mountain" (Mao 101 "Nanshan"), "Broken Fish-trap" (Mao 104 "Bigou"), and "Driving On" (Mao 105 "Zaiqu"). According to *Zuozhuan* (Huan 18.1), when the Lu ruler reproaches his wife for her sexual liaison with her own brother, he is brutally murdered at the instigation of Lord Xiang of Qi while visiting Qi.[41] The image of "the road to Lu, ever so wide" appears in both "Southern Mountain" and "Driving On." Although a symbol of the marriage (the "daughter of Qi" has already taken this road and married the Lu ruler), it yet suggests the venue of transgression (i.e., the road taken by the adulterers, Lord Xiang of Qi and Wen Jiang). Thus "Southern Mountain" enumerates fine points about the ritual of marriage, rounding off each description with a question to the Qi ruler: "Why do you still long for her?" (line 6), "Why do you still pursue her?" (line 12), "Why do you still pester her?" (line 18), "Why do you go to such extremes still?" (line 24). Even if one discounts the historical context detailed in the commentaries, there is enough disquiet in these lines to suggest some sort of impropriety. The same cannot be said of "Driving On" and "Broken Fish-trap," which just seem to celebrate the pomp and circumstance of "a daughter of Qi" heading to Lu to be married.[42]

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[37] Durrant, Li, Schaberg 2016, 1:238-41.

[38] This "Wei lord" should be Lord Wen of Wei (r. 659-635 BCE), brother of Lady Xu of Mu and successor to Lord Yi of Wei.

[39] The Han tradition has "I" (*wo* 我) instead of "you" (*er* 爾): "You see me as lacking judgment, / But how can my thoughts not go far?"

[40] See Li 2007, 147-60.

Another cluster of poems are said to castigate the sexual transgressions of Lord Xuan of Wei (r. 718-700 BCE), who marries the prospective bride of his son, known to posterity as Xuan Jiang, when he espies her beauty (*Zuozhuan* Huan 16.3).[43] Xuan Jiang is to have a liaison with her stepson Zhaobo after Lord Xuan's death (*Zuozhuan* Min 2.5).[44] Thus, in "New Terrace" (Mao 43 "Xintai"), the bride seeking happiness in marriage finds instead "the unsightly toad" (line 4), which is thought to refer to Lord Xuan. The unexpected substitution may also be implied in the image of "wrong catch": "The fish net is set up, / But the goose makes its way into it" (lines 9-10). However, it seems quite possible that this is just a plaint about being married to an unworthy mate, and that the historical context could be the commentator's invention. Another poem, "Reaching Old Age with the Noble Man" (Mao 47 "Junzi jielao"), describes in glowing terms the glamor, resplendent raiment, and impressive retinue of a beautiful woman. The interpretation of this poem as a critical exposure of the gap between appearance and reality hinges on the two words "not good" *bu shu* 不淑 (line 6); their alternative meaning as "unfortunate" would challenge that reading. The allegation of scandal is indirect yet pointed in "The Walls Have Thistles" (Mao 46 "Qiang you ci"). "The walls have thistles / That cannot be swept clean. / The words of the inner chambers / Cannot be told. / What could have been told / are the most scandalous of words" (lines 1-6). Further variations of these lines point to deep, dark secrets that are too shameful to be uttered or will take too long to tell. The "inner chamber" may indeed suggest a sexual scandal, but is this really about Lord Xiang and Xuan Jiang? As with "New Terrace" and "Reaching Old Age," the commentator uses elements suggesting unhappiness and impropriety to tie poems to specific historical circumstances. Whereas the connection between marriage and political cohesion is repeatedly and explicitly confirmed (as noted above), the link between sexual transgression and political disorder remains quite elusive once we discount commentarial interventions.

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[41] Durrant, Li, Schaberg 2016, 1:132-5.

[42] Commentators (e.g., Dai Zhen 戴震 [1724-77], Zhu Xi) argue that the broken fish-trap is a metaphor for the breakdown of control or order, see *Shijing zhuxi*, 1:281; Zhu Xi 2007, 71.

[43] On the disastrous consequences of that union, see Durrant, Li, Schaberg 2016, 1:126-9.

[44] See ibid., 1:240-1.

Among the poems that depict scenes from a marriage are two with shared motifs: "The Lady Said, 'The Cock Has Crowed'" (Mao 82 "Nü yue jiming") and "The Cock Has Crowed" (Mao 96 "Jiming"). The wife's insistence that the cock has crowed elicits playful evasion from the husband, and both poems end with professions of love and devotion. He claims that "it is not yet dawn" (Mao 82, line 2), arguing that the sound comes from buzzing flies and that the light is from the moon (Mao 96, lines 3-4, 7-8). He speaks of going hunting and bringing home a big bird, she of preparing the meal from it, and he (or she) anticipates giving gifts of appreciation to his (or her) mate (Mao 82, lines 5-18). She urges him: "Come back after attending court, / Do not let others find fault with you because of me" (Mao 96, lines 11-12). This witty exchange heralds something that becomes potentially more fraught in the tradition. The ruler's neglect of duty because of romantic attachment becomes a dominant trope in later works.

Many poems about marriage or family lament the trials of separation. In "Picking Cocklebur" (Mao 3 "Juan'er"), the poetic speaker is so preoccupied with her absent husband that she fails to fill a basket despite repeated pickings. She puts down the basket on the road as she imagines the hardships endured by her husband. Three stanzas of the poems are taken up with the images of her husband's trials and tribulations—she visualizes the high terrain he traverses, his sickly horse and weary servant, and his unappeased longing for home as he drinks. Such conflation of perspectives through imagining the world of the absent beloved also appears in "Send out the Chariot", discussed above. Another example is "Climbing the Bare Mountain" (Mao 110 "Zhihu"), where a man on military duty imagines the concern and advice of his parents and brother. In "Eastern Mountain" (Mao 156 "Dongshan"), the soldier on his way home after three years of military campaign is filled with trepidation and longing as he imagines his dilapidated home and sighing wife and remembers her as a bride: "As a new bride she was so beautiful, / What would she be like now with the passage of years?" (lines 47-8). A comparable interlude appears in a soldier's plaint in "Beating Drums" (Mao 31 "Jigu"). In the midst of rancor (he is not sent home even after the conclusion of the campaign, lines 7-8) and confusion (he lost his horse, lines 9-12), he remembers: "'Beyond life and death, union and separation': / That was my promise to you. / I held your hands: / 'Together we will grow old'" (lines 13-16). Analogously, the pining wife punctuates her longing with images of public duty and martial glory. In "Little War Chariot" (Mao 128 "Xiaorong"), for example, the speaker praises her husband's virtue through an elaborate description of his chariot, horses, and weapons. In "Cock-pheasant" (Mao 33 "Xiongzhi"), the speaker moves abruptly from her sorrow to political criticism of those in power, perhaps reflecting her view that political incompetence or corruption is what brings about the campaigns that take her husband away. By contrast, there are lamentations of separation that focuses on the speaker's immediate context and the relentless passage of time marking the husband's absence, as in "The Fine Man on Duty" (Mao 66 "Junzi yu yi").

The plaint of the woman separated from her husband because of his public duty or military service seems almost restrained compared to the rancor and despair in the voice of the abandoned woman, featured in about a dozen poems in the *Book of Songs*. The abandoned woman later becomes a standard trope in the tradition, lending itself to allegorical purposes, such as the expression of political disappointment, and underwriting a poetics of restraint ("resentment without anger" [*yuan er bu nu* 怨而不怒]). Some of the examples from the *Book of*

Songs fit that model of unswerving devotion and lingering hopes for the husband's change of heart. Some, by contrast, are remarkable for their forthright anger and denunciation of the husband. Some are also longer and contain more narrative elements than poems about courtship and marriage in the *Book of Songs*. Whereas the latter can be tied to social and ritual occasions (e.g., celebration of weddings), songs about abandonment tend to be personal and particular. "The Commoner" (Mao 58 "Mang"), for example, tells the story of meeting, seduction, longing, possibly an improper union, hardships, and betrayal; the man develops from being a sulking, volatile suitor into a faithless and violent husband. In another example, the speaker in "Cypress Boat" (Mao 26 "Bozhou"), probably a coerced or abandoned woman, uses a series of negative comparisons to make clear that her will is not to be bent: "My heart is not a mirror, / It cannot hold everything…/My heart is not a grindstone, / It cannot be turned. / My heart is not a mat, / It cannot be rolled up" (lines 7-8, 13-16). Despite persistent heartache ("Sorrow clings to me / Like unwashed clothes," lines 27-28), she is certain of her worth and dignity (*weiyi* 威儀) and longs to "take flight" (*fenfei* 奮飛) from her woes.

The image of the abandoned woman brings us to other poems about desire premised on absence and the state of being unfulfilled. The river comes up intermittently as the symbol separating the lover from the unattainable beloved, as with the "roaming maiden" on the other side of the river in "The Han River is Wide" (Mao 9 "Han guang"), or the elusive fair lady by the water amidst reeds and frost in the season of autumnal melancholy in "Rush Leaves" (Mao 129 "Jianjia"). The river is an obstacle that can be overcome in "The Gourd Has Bitter Leaves" (Mao 34 "Pao you kuye"). The female speaker in that poem enjoins her lover to cross the river—if it is deep, wade straight through, if it is shallow, hitch your skirt; take heart from the cries of the bird and the rising water, for the bird is calling for its mate, while the river, though rising, barely touches the hub of the carriage. The assertive voice here is quite typical; the female speakers in the *Book of Songs* sometimes frankly avow their desires and remain combative even when rejected, unlike their counterparts later in the tradition.

Other poems on courtship or marriage in the *Book of Songs* celebrate longing and joyous communion, often concretized through the giving or exchange of gifts, as in "The Good Maiden" (Mao 42 "Jingnü"), "Hemp on the Mound" (Mao 74 "Qiu zhong you ma"), "Quince" (Mao 64 "Mugua"), "The Lady Said, 'The Cock Has Crowed,'" "Rivers Zhen and Wei" (Mao 95 "Zhen Wei"), and "Elms by the East Gate" (Mao 137 "Dongmen zhi fen"). Some describe romantic encounters, as in "Creeper in the Wilds" (Mao 94 "Ye you mancao"). This is a meeting in the open, where dew condenses thickly on the creepers. The beautiful one (the gender marker is not clear), with bright eyes and clear brow, is willing. "By chance we meet, / And she (or he) let me have my way" (lines 5-6). "By chance we meet, / And with you I share joy" (lines 11-12). The same buoyant tone informs "Among the Mulberries" (Mao 48 "Sangzhong"), whose simple question and answer form ("Where shall I pick dodder? / In the fields of Mei. / Who am I thinking of? / The beautiful Meng Jiang" [lines 1-4]) conveys the certainty of an imminent assignation (or tells of a recent one). In some ways, these are the kind of poems that most resist allegorical readings or ritual contextualization. They are too transparent, too resistant to the search for "deeper meanings."

The deliberative dimension may be better served by slightly more enigmatic poems, like "There is a Dead Doe in the Wilds" (Mao 23 "Yeyou shijun"). "There is a dead doe in the wilds, / White rushes wrap it. / There is a girl longing for spring, / A fine man shows her the way. / There are oak and elm branches in the wood, / There is a dead deer in the wilds. / White rushes bound and wrap it, / There is a girl just like jade. / Slowly! Gently! / Do not ruffle my kerchief! / Do not make the dog howl!" The probable context for this poem has been construed variously as successful or failed seduction, courtship, or marriage proposal. Depending on the context, the dead doe or deer wrapped in white rushes can be a gift of courtship or betrothal, or it can be a metaphor for the "covering up" of lost innocence. All agree, however, that the speaker of the last stanza is the girl. Is her admonition serious, forbidding, playful, timid, or anxious? So long as we go on arguing, the relationship between desire and order remains complex and multi-faceted enough to be deemed an abiding concern.

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3

THE CONTENTS OF THE HOMERIC EPICS AND THE *SHIJING*: COMPARATIVE REMARKS

Fritz-Heiner MUTSCHLER

The two papers to be commented on differ in approach and design. Indeed, they are so different that it seems difficult to compare what they are discussing, i.e. the contents of the Homeric poems and the *Book of Songs*. This situation derives less from the idiosyncrasies of the authors than from the difference in the formal structure of the texts under discussion: On the one hand, we have two grand narratives, on the other, a collection of 305 relatively short poems. Thus, it is natural that when presenting the contents of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, Øivind Andersen talks in each case first about the plot and then about a few particularly important themes, whereas Wai-yee Li immediately turns to the plurality of concerns and scenes we encounter in the *Book of Songs*. Later on, we will see whether there is a connection between the specific form and the specific contents of the texts. First, however, I shall start my comparative discussion by turning to the subject matter with which they are concerned.[1]

Subject Matter:
War and Peace – the Extraordinary and the Quotidian

If one looks at the contents of the texts, the first thing one observes is a difference: on the one hand, the preponderance of war and fighting and life-threatening adventure in the Homeric epics and, on the other hand, the much broader spectrum of human affairs, many of them concerning day-to-day life, in the *Shijing*.

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[1] For excellent comparative observations, see Owen 1996.

In the *Iliad*, the main subject matter of the narrative is war. The events concerning Achilles' wrath are part of the ten-year war for Troy and much of the text consists of descriptions of fighting, blood, and death (Andersen 302-4). At the end of the poem, the death of Hector, the main defender of Troy, seals the future destruction of the city. The action of the *Odyssey*, too, unfolds against the backdrop of the Trojan War. The epic narrates the adventures of the city's destroyer on his long journey back to Ithaca and his efforts to reestablish himself as the master of his home by killing his wife's suitors (Andersen 311-13).

However, glimpses of an ordinary life of peace and contentment are also to be found. In the *Odyssey*, the return of the hero to a regular life as the local king who, respected and revered, rules in peace over his domain is the goal to which the action is geared. And the *Iliad*, too, contains "intimations of another, peaceful world beyond the realm of Ares" (Andersen 305). At regular intervals, similes offer scenes not only of nature but also of agriculture and stock-breeding. In his conversation with Agamemnon's ambassadors in Book 9, Achilles himself envisions the peaceful long-lasting life of a peasant king as the alternative to his early death at Troy. Finally, on the hero's new shield, beside a city under siege, the god-smith Hephaestus also depicts a city at peace enjoying "the blessings of ordered communal life" (Andersen 306). Thus, in the Homeric poems, the foil of a regular life in peace and order is evoked beside war and adventure, which, nevertheless, on the whole, dominate the narratives.

The situation in the *Book of Songs* is different as the spectrum of human affairs that comes into view is broader and more varied. Wars, such as the overthrow of the Shang by the Zhou and the Zhou wars against "barbarians" like the Xianyun, are treated in a certain number of poems, "but the attention to military prowess and warfare in these works is merely intermittent" (Li 338). There is no interest in the description of the actual fighting. This is the famous "ellipse of battle" that has become a commonplace in the characterization of the *Shijing*[2] and that stands in stark contrast to the *Iliad* and, partly, also to the *Odyssey*. This corresponds to a different view of war in general. Though the Homeric epics do not deny the terrible sides of war (Andersen 304), achievements in war are, nevertheless, the gateway to glory, the only means to overcome death. In contrast, in the *Shijing*, even the military successes of the ancient Zhou rulers do not seem to have much value in themselves but are primarily praised as the necessary means to restore order and peace. In addition, there are a good number of poems that deplore the hardships of military service – a topic not alien to the Homeric poems, but much more forcefully expressed in the *Shijing*, namely by those immediately affected (Li 347). More important, however, is the fact that the majority of the poems deal with subjects other than war. The topics touch on all aspects of life and mostly of life in peace. There are courting and wedding songs but also songs about love's pains; there are songs for festive occasions, songs for games and dancing, songs about hunting, songs concerning work in the fields and the growth of the crops, and poems about the political conditions in general and the, often bad, conduct of officials in particular, and so on. If we add the aforementioned poems on the hardship of military service or on military campaigns past and present, it is obvious that the picture of life and human affairs that the *Shijing* presents is much more comprehensive than that of the Homeric poems.

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[2] See the "classics" Wang 1988 and Keightley 1993.

If we want to grasp this difference on a more abstract level, we can state: the Homeric epics are, first of all, concerned with the extraordinary, be it an outstanding war, cruel fighting or exotic and unheard-of adventures, whereas "normal" life comes into view only in glimpses and to provide contrast and background to the extraordinary. In the *Book of Songs*, it is the other way around. There are poems that deal with extraordinary situations and outstanding achievements. But the majority of poems are about the joys and sorrows of day-to-day life, be it agricultural activity, military service, happy and unrequited love, hunting and feasting, the merits and failures of those in charge, etc. That is to say, while the Homeric epics are selectively interested in what is outstanding and extraordinary, the *Shijing* is comprehensively interested in everything, which includes the extraordinary and the ordinary alike.[3]

Characters (1): Heroes and Others

Similar observations can be made if one looks at the characters who are active (or passive) in the texts. At the center of each Homeric poem is a great hero: Achilles in the *Iliad*, Odysseus in the *Odyssey*.[4] The heroic ideal embodied by the former is inseparable from war. As Sarpedon, one of Zeus' mortal sons, points out, it is by fighting, by taking one's stand in the forefront and bearing the blaze of battle more than others that the heroic leaders achieve what their life is geared to: honor from those around them and glory with posterity (Andersen 307f.). This holds true, with different nuances, for all the protagonists of the *Iliad*, and it holds true, in particular, for Achilles, even if, in his case, his concern with honor is also presented as of a potentially dubious nature. The eponym of the *Odyssey* is a different kind of hero.[5] It is true that a considerable part of his fame results from his characteristic as a "destroyer of cities" but, on the other hand, he is successful less through force than through resourcefulness, caution and patience, with curiosity and a certain recklessness also constituting part of his character (Andersen 317-19). But, in spite of these differences, just as in the case of Achilles and the *Iliad*, it is his individual fate that constitutes the chief subject of the narrative of the *Odyssey*.

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[3] Owen 1996 speaks several times of "wholeness" as a characteristic of the world of the *Shijing*.

In the *Shijing*, we have, once again, a different situation. First of all, it is doubtful whether the category of "hero" is really useful for an analysis of the collection. It is obvious that there are no figures that dominate the text to the same extent as Achilles and Odysseus dominate the Homeric epics. If, for the sake of the argument, we nevertheless look for figures which are comparable to the heroes of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, it is the Zhou ancestors, Dukes Houji, Liu, and Danfu, and the founders of the dynasty, Kings Wen and Wu, who come to mind. The poems that sing of them are full of reverence and esteem. Yet there are differences between them and heroes like Achilles and Odysseus.

The Zhou ancestors from Houji to King Wu make their appearance not as individuals but as members of a genealogical group and they act as such. Furthermore, their achievements are quite different from those of their Homeric counterparts.[6] Houji is celebrated for establishing the agrarian way of life and spreading it throughout the realm ("How Splendid" Mao 275 "Si wen"). Duke Liu "is praised for his strong love of the people”[7]. And even in the poems which are devoted to the victories of Zhou, “the heroes are instigators of sacrifices, builders, and commanders; their role as warriors is not emphasized” (Li 338f.). This difference in the orientation of the heroic ideal is consistent with what we have observed concerning the preferred subject matter of our texts. Finally, and most importantly, though the benefactors and rulers of old can be considered to be outstanding figures in the *Shijing*, they appear only in a dozen or two of its 305 poems. In the others, a large number of other people appear, some of them named but most of them anonymous, and we are made familiar with their experiences and emotions. In the Homeric epics, it is the great, the extraordinary heroes who stand in the limelight, while the *Book of Songs* directs its limelight onto a multitude of people, some of whom are leaders, some, at least, in elevated positions, but very many commoners without so much as a name.

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[4] On Achilles and Odysseus in a comparative context, see Nagy 2009.

[5] For a succinct description of the commonalities and differences between Odysseus and Achilles, see Clarke 2004, 86-9.

[6] Wang 1988, 76-113.

Thus, if we ask ourselves which sections or layers of society the Greek and the Chinese poems are concerned with, it becomes obvious that the perspective of the Homeric epics is much more limited than that of the *Shijing*. The action of both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* is set in the upper layers of society, the landed aristocracy, the kings (*basilêes*) and their entourage. All the major figures in both epics, the leaders of the Greeks and the Trojans in the *Iliad*, and Odysseus and the suitors in the *Odyssey*, belong to this class. Admittedly, in the *Iliad*, the commoners play a certain role in the fighting and in the assembly of the army, and in the *Odyssey*, members of Odysseus’ household are even involved in the main action; however, that does not change the overall impression.[8] This is in clear contrast with the *Book of Songs* where the different layers of society are given equal space. The four sections of the collection reflect the divisions of (Shang- and) Zhou society. While the poems of the last section, *Song*, and a number of the poems of the third section, *Daya*, deal with the former and present ruling houses, and most of the poems of the second and third section, *Daya* and *Xiaoya*, are concerned with the activities of members of the higher and lower aristocracy, the majority of the poems of the first section of the collection, *Guofeng*, which is by far the largest one, are about the affairs of the common people and give expression to their thoughts and feelings.[9] On the whole, the *Book of Songs* gives a much fuller picture of society and of the concerns of its different members than the Homeric epics.

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[7] Wang 1988, 85.

[8] Also because the most important of Odysseus’ servants, his wet-nurse Eurycleia and the swineherd Eumaeus, are of noble descent.

Characters (2): Females or Men and Women[10]

This applies also to the treatment of females. Thus, it is not surprising that Li dedicates the third section of her paper (Li 348-56) to the different kinds of relationships between men and women, while in Andersen's paper the space dedicated to women is relatively small.

Li titles her discussion "Desire and Order". She first deals with poems that present marriage as the backbone of the socio-political order. "The balance between desire and order underlies many poems on marriage" (Li 349); others even "celebrate political cohesion" that comes about through the marital conjunction (Li 348). Accordingly, a woman's "longing" for "her natal domain" may "implicitly convey discontent" and thus lead to political complications (Li 350f.). "More threatening to socio-political order", however, are cases of "sexual transgression", which are addressed in several poems, even if the link between such transgression and political disorder may be only hinted at (Li 351-3). Other poems point to the negative impact romantic love may have on the ruler's fulfillment of his duty (Li 353). Finally, there are numerous poems that evoke the pains of separation, rejection, or abandonment, just as there are poems celebrating "joyous communion" or describing "romantic encounters" (Li 355f.). On the whole, as much space is given to the voice of women as to that of men, and the situations addressed are not restricted to one layer of society but concern persons of all walks of life.

Though the attention of the Homeric epics is mostly focused on the male heroes, females do play a role as well.[11] Concerning the *Iliad*, it is first worth noting that the dispute between Achilles and Agamemnon directly concerns women, namely the female captives Chryseis and Briseis. However, the dispute is not about them as individual human beings. Instead, they are important as tokens of honor, which is the true object of the dispute. Second, one of the most moving scenes in the narrative is the farewell of Hector and Andromache in Book 6. Yet, as much as the feelings and tears of Andromache have touched readers throughout the centuries, the main purpose of the scene seems to be to give Hector the opportunity to display his heroic ethos (see Andersen 308). Third, as for Helen, her affair with Paris is a clear case of sexual transgression and, as the *Shijing* suggests, sexual transgression leads to political disaster – in this case to war, to the death of hundreds of warriors on both sides, and to the extinction of Troy. This causal connection is known to everyone and undisputed. But Helen is not presented in an unfavorable light. She is treated kindly by Priam and Hector, and the old men of Troy take delight in the sight of her. That is to say, Helen's beauty appears as a natural force that neutralizes moral considerations. And the couple's transgression, instead of being problematized, simply serves the build-up of the great scenario within which the true problem can unfold: that of Achilles' wrath, its reasons and its consequences.

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[9] This holds true independently of whether we are dealing here with "folk poetry, modified folk poetry, or [court poems] inspired by folk poetry" (Owen 1996, xvii). Concerning the view from below, see Li 335f. (agriculture) and 347 (military campaigns).

[10] Pioneering on gender relations in first millennium BCE Greece and China is Zhou 2010.

[11] For an overview, see Felson and Slatkin 2004.

In the *Odyssey*, the role of women and of male-female relations is more prominent. During the journey home, there are the goddesses Circe and Calypso and the Phaeacian king's daughter Nausicaa, all of whom are in love with the hero; and in Ithaca there is his faithful wife on the one hand, and the licentious maid servants who get involved with the suitors on the other. Nevertheless, two facts distinguish the *Odyssey* from the *Book of Songs*: First, at the center of the poet's, and thus the reader's, attention is the male hero and the story of his journey and homecoming, and, in this story, the *women* – with the only exception of Penelope – appear as enlivening elements but not as independent agents on the same level. Second, only the high-ranking women, i.e. the goddesses, the king's daughter, and the queen, are granted respectable voices of their own. The maidservants are paraded as impudent and dissolute and, in the end, are hanged from a beam "like geese".

Digression: Structure and Contents

Is the structural difference between the Homeric epics and the *Book of Songs* that I mentioned at the beginning in any way connected with the differences between these texts in terms of contents as far as we have discussed them up to now? I think the answer to this question has to be positive, as I will try to indicate with respect to a few points.[12]

My first point concerns the opposition of war and peace. There can be no doubt that war as a whole (or an ingeniously selected section of it) lends itself well to a unified narrative. It consists of a series of homogeneous (and thrilling) actions that lead from a clear beginning – the war's outbreak – to a clear end – its formal closure. In contrast, peace is a diffuse phenomenon without inherent beginning and end and giving room for many different kinds of human activities. This kind of phenomenon can be represented well in a large collection of independent poems, some of which may even be dedicated to "peace's other", i.e. war, so that all spheres of human activities are included in the picture. The point could be made in similar fashion concerning the opposition of adventure and daily life.

A correlation between the structure and the contents of the texts seems also to exist with respect to the characters with which they are concerned. The extraordinary fate of an extraordinary hero requires an elevated form of poetic treatment, such as that supplied by the grand epic. And – viewed from the other direction – if a long narrative is to retain the attention of the audience over thousands of lines, the extraordinary fate of an extraordinary hero is a most appropriate subject. On the other hand, the experiences of a multitude of people can only be represented adequately in a multitude of independent poems evoking a multitude of particular situations. And, because of the variety of people and experiences presented, such a collection will be capable of keeping a broad audience interested even if, or exactly because, it includes men *and* women of higher *and* lower status.[13]

At least as a side remark, I would like to point to the fact that we find a similar relation between structure and contents if we look at ancient Chinese and Greco-Roman historiography. It has become a commonplace that the most obvious difference between Sima Qian's *Shiji* and the works in its succession on the one hand, and most of Greco-Roman historiography on the other, is a structural one. The Chinese works are divided into several independent parts which are subdivided into autonomous chapters, while the Greek and Roman works present continuous narratives, interrupted here and there by some digression but, on the whole, unfolding in one unified movement from a beginning to an end. The parallel with the structural difference between the Homeric epics and the *Book of Songs* is evident. And in terms of content, too, there are differences between the historical works of China and those of the West that are comparable to those between the poetic texts under consideration. In the Greco-Roman works, we have a clear concentration on politics and especially on war as its most decisive means. The claim to be describing the greatest war ever fought becomes a recurrent motif. The Chinese works, on the other hand, take a more comprehensive approach that includes a genuine interest in the peaceful side of history and in non-military, partly also non-political activities of the agents. In line with this, the Western works are mostly concerned with the activities of the political elite, while the Chinese works also talk about members of other strata of society insofar as they can lay claim to any sort of interest.[14]

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[12] On what follows more extensively, see Mutschler 1997, 221-8.

[13] Owen has expressed the, so to speak, sociological point implied here in the following, likeably partisan way (Owen 1996, xvi): "Epic unity demands a focus that speaks for one group and excludes other voices: the voices of the common people, the voices of women, the voices from all aspects of life outside the heroic ethos. … But the legacy of Zhou culture prohibited deafness to those other voices: it was essential that they have their say, that attention be paid to them."

This is not the place to pursue this any further, but the indicated analogies between the foundation texts that are the object of this volume and the historiographical texts of both cultures deserve further thought.

Man and Divine Powers

An important commonality between the Homeric epics and the *Book of Songs* is the fact that in both we see divine powers at work that continuously influence human affairs. However, in each case these divine powers are rather different, both in terms of character and in terms of how they intervene in the dealings of men.

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[14] Particularly striking is the fact that just as the three (or four) parts of the *Shijing* reflect the social hierarchy of ancient China so does the subdivision of Sima Qian's *Shiji*, only in reverse order: The *Benji* deal with the ruling houses of the realm, the *Shijia* with the regional princely houses, the *Liezhuan* also with individuals of lower or no rank.

In the *Iliad* and in the *Odyssey*, the divine powers are the famous Homeric gods. Andersen lists their main characteristics (Andersen 321ff.). The Homeric gods are “immortal” and “live forever”, they “live lightly” and are “blessed”. This is what distinguishes them from men. On the other hand, they are in many respects just like humans, only on a larger scale. They look like humans though they are more beautiful. They feel and act like humans: they love and hate, they are angry and rejoice, they “quarrel” with each other, and “threaten each other”. They have their special fields of competence and their individual characteristics. They exist in a hierarchy: Zeus, the father of many of them, is their overlord. His will is powerful but not always undisputed. Finally, the Homeric gods not only resemble humans, many of them, through sexual, emotional, or familial ties, are also closely related to the human world.

The divine powers of the *Book of Songs* are rather different. There are, above all, Heaven and a “God on High” (Shangdi), the agencies which direct or, at least, deeply influence human affairs. There is nothing anthropomorphic about Heaven and the “God on High”. They are relatively abstract agencies without physical or emotional ties to the human world. Yet their authority is supreme. A deity different in character is Houji, the deified Zhou-ancestor who, through this genealogical connection and the myth of his miraculous conception and birth (Li 333f), is closer to the Homeric gods without being endowed with the same kind of individualized personality.

As the divine powers in Homer and the *Shijing* differ in character, so they differ with respect to why and in whose favor they intervene in human affairs. The Homeric gods intervene mostly on the basis of their personal relations to an individual hero or party. Often these interventions are solicited by the plight of their favorites or the success of their favorites’ opponents, and they are almost always connected with feelings of sympathy and concern or antipathy and aversion. Though these interventions partly neutralize each other, on the whole, it is assumed that it is the will of the gods, and especially of Zeus, that determines the course of action. This does not prevent there being also an impersonal “fate” that exercises its influence on human affairs, sometimes in parallel with the will of Zeus or of the gods, sometimes on its own.[15]

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[15] Cf. Bröcker 1975, 36f.

This is more or less the situation in the *Iliad*. In the *Odyssey*, the picture is slightly different.[16] Here, the number of gods involved in the action is reduced, the protagonists on the divine level being Zeus, Athena and Poseidon. More importantly, the gods who intervene in human action do so less willfully and in a more principled way than in the *Iliad*, so that it is not without reason that, already in Book 1, Zeus explicitly rejects the blame which mortals too easily put upon the gods instead of seeing their own transgressions.[17] On the other hand, just as in the *Iliad*, divine interventions mostly occur in favor of an individual or out of anger against him, and in most cases this individual is Odysseus.

In contrast, Heaven – just as the "God on High" who shares most of Heaven's characteristics – is an impersonal authority without ties to individual humans. Its concern is with the socio-political whole. It wields its power, first and foremost, by conferring and withdrawing its mandate to and from those who rule. The criterion for its interventions is the moral quality of governance. Good governance entails continuation of Heaven's support, bad governance its revocation. Thus, reference to the mandate of heaven can serve the legitimation of power (Li 337f.). In other cases, the reminder of the loss of the mandate by the Xia and the Shang serves as a remonstrance and a warning (Li 344f.). Heaven – together with the "God on High" – can also be directly addressed for help, e.g. when a drought threatens the existence of the community (Li 345).[18] This is similar with a figure like Houji, Lord Millet, the deified ancestor of the Zhou ruling house. Houji is praised for the spread of agriculture throughout the realm and because he "initiates the sacrifice for the bounty of the land" (Li 339). In other words, his commitment, too, is with the community rather than with any outstanding individuals.

In summary, we can note the following: 1. In both the Homeric poems and the *Shijing*, there is an awareness that human capacity is limited, and that the course of human life is influenced or determined by higher powers on whose favor men depend for their well-being. 2. In the Greek epics, the higher powers are individualized personal gods whose conduct towards humans is determined to a significant degree by personal feelings and considerations, and the human beings whose fates are affected by these higher powers are, first and foremost, the heroic individuals who are at the center of attention. 3. The decisive divine agencies in the *Shijing* are Heaven and an equally abstract "God on High". On an intermediate level, there are, in addition, the deified Zhou ancestors, like Houji. These divine powers are less concerned with the fate of individuals as such than with that of the community or its representatives, and their interventions are conceived of as reactions to the propriety or impropriety of human comportment.

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[16] Cf. Kearns 2004, 67-9.

[17] 1.32-4 (see Andersen 320). At the same time, it is in the *Odyssey* that the frivolous story of the adultery of Ares and Aphrodite, their shackling by Hephaestus, and the laughter of the divine lookers-on is told – though not in the poet's own voice but by the singer Demodocus as entertainment at a festive occasion.

[18] Even though in "River of Heaven" (Mao 258 "Yun Han") the "appeal for help" may be mixed up with "self-justification" (Li loc.cit.).

This picture, however, is not complete, since it does not take into account situations in which the divine powers prove unreliable and humans feel deserted by the gods. Both the Chinese and the Greek texts present such situations, in interestingly differing ways. In the *Shijing*, we have a good number of poems in which the speaker accuses or questions Heaven¸ even in the "grand narrative of victory and historical destiny fulfilled" (Li 346). There are soldiers' lamentations about the hardship military service has brought them, and "there are … no less urgent plaints from officers that call heaven into question" (Li 347). Such pronouncements may indicate a "gap between self and society" (Li 347). They are, at any rate, another example of the *Shijing's* comprehensiveness: the course of events is viewed from different perspectives, from the perspective of those above and from that of those below. In Homer, things take another turn. The decisive passage is the account of the final duel between Achilles and Hector in Book 22 of the *Iliad* (see Andersen 308f. and 324f.). The Trojan hero is tricked by Athena, who, taking on the guise of his brother Deiphobus, "beguiles the doomed hero into believing in his success" and in his brother's help, but when he needs this help she vanishes from the scene. Hector knows now "that the gods have summoned me deathward" (22.297). Yet, exactly in this moment of abandonment by men and gods he proves, once and for all, his heroic nature: "Let me at least not die without a struggle, inglorious, but do some big thing first, that men to come shall know of it" (22.304f.). He charges and is killed.

Man and Nature

If we want to compare the role of nature in our texts, we can distinguish two things: the role of images of nature as a poetic device and the role of nature as part of the "action", i.e. as an object of concern to the characters of the poems.

Images of nature appear in the great majority of poems in the *Book of Songs*. This has not escaped the attention of commentators, who have developed a system of classification for the respective usages. Though the simile or comparison, *bi*, has been dutifully registered as well, it is the *xing*, the "affective image"[19] with which many poems open, that has been felt to be the most characteristic. Accordingly, Li presents numerous passages where such an image, through analogy or contrast, induces the description of human circumstances and feelings (Li 330ff.). In the Homeric poems, images of nature play a similarly important role in the famous epic similes. The world of animals especially, both wild and domestic, is frequently represented. Thus, one can note here another commonality between the Greek and the Chinese texts. At the same time, however, as has been correctly observed, there is a characteristic difference between the Homeric simile and the "affective image" of the *Shijing*: "In Homer's similes, the natural world is evoked as a way of commenting upon the human situation. In the *Classic of Poetry*, we begin with the natural world and then move to the human context. In the Homeric case, the human situation is the focus, in the Chinese, the human situation is placed in the context of the natural world."[20] Shankman and Durrant's interpretation of the latter fact as evidence of a particular Chinese awareness of human "participation in the natural world" is not unconvincing.

This awareness can also be observed in many poems of the *Shijing* in which nature is the immediate object of the speaker's concern. Most of these poems are about agriculture and many are prayers designed to ensure or give thanks for the beneficence of nature (Li 332ff.), sometimes to deflect its potential hostility (e.g. "River of Heaven", Mao 258 "Yun Han"). The consciousness of man's dependence on nature and of the necessity to maintain a harmonious relationship with it is the continuous keynote underlying these texts. Nature's inhospitable side appears, furthermore, in some of the poems that deal with rain and cold as part of the hardship of military service, i.e. of the involuntary soldier's life (e.g. "Picking bracken", Mao 167 "Caiwei"), though the stress here is sometimes less on the speaker's relationship with nature than on his entrapment in social and political constraints.

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[19] Li and others. Nylan uses the term "evocative image" (Nylan 2001, 192).

[20] Shankman and Durrant 2000, 61.

In the Homeric epics, the relationship between man and nature is less prominent than in the *Book of Songs*, and where it comes into play it appears in a different light. Thus, the agricultural sphere appears only as a foil to the sphere of war and adventure. It represents a counter-world that is only thought of but never lived in. Neither in the *Iliad* nor in the *Odyssey* does the interplay between human labor and ritual and beneficent nature gain the thematic significance it has in the *Shijing*. In addition, the shape taken by "inhospitable" nature in Homer is rather different from that taken in the *Shijing*. There, rain and cold are presented as contributing to the soldiers' hardships, which in the final analysis are caused by decisions of the political leadership. In the *Odyssey*, nature does not simply add to the inconveniences of the common man but threatens the lonely hero's life by destroying his raft and throwing him around in winds and waves. In the "storm at sea" (which becomes a standing element of Western epics), the hero experiences his existential exposure to the powers of nature – and to those of hostile gods – and once again is given the opportunity to prove his strength and endurance – with the help of friendly gods. "Participation in the natural world" is not a value to which he is oriented.

Two overriding concerns

The different observations made in the preceding sections could probably be shown to correlate with each other, at least to a certain extent. I will, however, let them stand by themselves, without trying to impose a conclusive unity. Instead, I will end by pointing out two overriding concerns, one pertaining to the Homeric epics, the other to the *Book of Songs*, that surface in both Andersen's and Li's papers and that deserve to be highlighted because they may touch upon the heart of the matter.

Achilles and Odysseus, the heroes of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, are quite different in character. Nevertheless, they have one aim in common: the successful quest for the preservation and confirmation of their identity. In both cases, this identity is endangered. The dispute with

Agamemnon “leads him [=Achilles] into conflict with his own self” (Andersen 310). Though destined, as it had always seemed, for glory and a short life, he now comes “to doubt the value of heroic life and heroic death” and “opts out of it all” (Andersen 310). After the death of Patroclus, however, Achilles finds, so to speak, his old self. He “is *ôkymoros*, ‘soon to die’, as he has known all along” and he now “gladly accepts his fate”, determined to take revenge and to “win excellent glory (*kleos esthlon*)” (Andersen 311). The story of Odysseus, too, is a story about identity endangered and reaffirmed. Goddesses tempt him with the offer of eternal life at their side but Odysseus decides to stay the – mortal – man he is. His adventures make him now hide, now disclose, now temporarily lose, now recuperate his identity (Andersen 319f.). And even back in Ithaca, he “reveals his identity only gradually, even to friends” and “spends a long time incognito in his own home, even with his own wife, until his identity is again revealed and he is reinstated” (Andersen 320). Thus, both Achilles and Odysseus stand out because they succeed in remaining themselves, because they accept early death (Achilles) and mortality (Odysseus) in order to truly become who they are.

Li shows that the concerns evoked in the poems of the *Shijing* are more varied than those of the Homeric epics. In the three parts of her paper, she highlights three of them in particular. The first one is the concern about the growth of the crops, i.e. about the physical basis of the community’s well-being (Li 332ff.). The second one is about the support of heaven, which is sought after, in particular, by those in power but a cause of worry to those in the lower ranks as well (Li 336ff.). Finally, there are the concerns relating to the relationship between the sexes, to love and desire (Li 348ff.). Yet, as Li’s remarks bring out clearly, in addition to these concerns and connected with them there is another, overarching one. This is the concern for order and harmony. The success of agricultural labor rests on a harmonious relationship between man and nature and it serves not only the physical well-being of the community but also its social and political order (Li 332 and 335). The mandate of heaven is designed to strengthen the will and the ability of those in power to spread “constant principles to the whole realm” (Li 336) and to promote “social cohesion” (Li 341). Finally, as marriage can be seen as “the core of socio-political order” (Li 348, see also 349-50), sexual transgression poses a threat to it, especially when it occurs in the ruling houses (Li 351-3).

That the concern for the preservation and confirmation of individual identity and the concern for social, political and, so to speak, cosmic order and harmony appear as characteristics of the Greek and the Chinese foundation texts respectively, is perhaps not a very surprising observation. It seems, nevertheless, worth recording.

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4

“Heroes” and “Gods” in Homer and the *Classic of Poetry*

Andrew H. Plaks*

Among the various points of intersection that emerge in the descriptive pieces by Professors Andersen and Li, I will focus on only two specific aspects of the literary vision that finds its paradigmatic expression in the immortal verses of the ancient Greek and Chinese poets: the conception of the “hero,” and the role of the “gods”.

With respect to the first of these thematic clusters, let us begin by reconsidering the striking divergence in the treatment of heroic exploits on the battlefield in the two sets of writings. Clearly, in the *Shijing*, martial prowess does not account for the entire spectrum of qualities of mind and spirit that define the Homeric hero. But the very conspicuous paucity of attention in the ancient Chinese canons to anything like the *aristeia* of the Greek warrior and the dramatic details of combat – not only in the *Shijing* poetic corpus, but also in classical compendia of historical narrative, such as the *Zuo Commentary on the Spring and Autumn Annals* (*Zuozhuan*) – has led many scholars to rather far-reaching speculation on the essential underpinnings of Sinitic civilization. One of the most influential of these studies has been David Keightley’s path-breaking essay “Clean Hands and Shining Helmets: Heroic Action in Early Chinese and Greek Culture”, in which he suggested a direct connection between the relatively unimposing representation of the human figure in early Chinese visual art and prevailing ideas about the place of man in the universe in much of classic Chinese philosophical discourse.[1] This paper has inspired much spirited controversy since its first circulation in manuscript some twenty or thirty years ago, precisely because it seemed to touch upon a very deep-seated and abiding core of conception in pre-modern Chinese thought and art. That is not to say, of course, that the world of the *Shijing* is devoid of any sense of the grandeur of the human story. In several of the longer poems in the so-called "Dynastic Hymns" (*song*) sections of the canonical arrangement of the *Shijing* poems, most conspicuously, we do experience something like the monumentality of "the age of the hero", in this case, the era of the great conquests and foundational exploits of the "sage-kings" credited with the formation of the eternal world order of classical China. Even here, however, one witnesses a relative lack of interest in the shining glory of individual strength and fortitude, and far less in the evocation of the thrill of battle or the terror of mortal confrontation of the sort captured forever in frozen moments on certain Greek vases. It has thus been tempting to conclude that this observation about the representation of "the best of the Zhou" in pictorial and literary art reflects prevailing cultural norms associated with the Confucian world-view, privileging notions of harmony and order over the splendor of the individual actor on the stage of history.

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* Editor’s note: During the extended process of preparing this volume for publication, I had the most welcome opportunity of an exchange of opinions with Andy Plaks, one of the few people with true double competence in both

Viewing this phenomenon from the bifocal comparative perspective of the present volume, however, I would like to suggest that this commonly observed divergence in the artistic representation of man may be less telling than it appears, since to insist on a fundamental dichotomy of conception between the ancient Greek and the Chinese notion of the hero is to ignore the very elementary generic distinction that divides the literary vision of the *Shijing* from that of the epic, as represented by the Homeric corpus. Even in those "Hymns" that recount some of the grandest formative moments in the human story – precisely those triumphs of the sort we regularly describe as "epic" when they are extolled in ancient and modern narrative poems the world over – the literary effect here remains essentially *lyric* in nature, governed by the prevailing aesthetic forms of non-narrative verse, in which the symmetries of parallel couplets, end-stopped lines, and the like, prize balance and decorum over the breathless forward motion of *hypotaxis*.

Chinese and Western Classics. I am very grateful that he agreed to the publication of his stimulating reflections.

[1] Keightley, David N. "Clean hands and shining helmets: heroic action in early Chinese and Greek culture." In T. Siebers (ed.). *Religion and the Authority of the Past*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press 1993, 13-51.

And so, when the anonymous Chinese bards eulogize the overthrow of the Shang and the founding of the Zhou *imperium*, they may assign these glorious achievements to uniquely charismatic individual "heroes," but they never invoke their poetic muse to "sing of arms and men." Instead, their fragmentary panegyrics remain essentially celebratory in tone, with none of the exquisite dramatic tension that we experience in the last few books of the *Iliad*, or in unbearable moments of tragic *anagnorisis* in the *Shahnameh* or the *Ramayana*. Given this differentiation of literary purpose and execution, therefore, there is little reason to expect anything akin to an epic vision of the hero in the essentially lyric modes of the *Shijing* – neither in terms of the specific repertoire of poetic devices we associate with the epic form on the basis of our Homeric models, nor with respect to the "sense of the heroic" as a universal mode of conceptualization – that can support this type of sweeping conclusion about ancient Chinese and Greek cultural orientation.

A second commonality that emerges in the two thematic reviews of our objects of comparative scrutiny – another point observed more in the breach in the *Shijing* poems, in stark contrast to the sense of dramatic immediacy in Homer's epic vision – is the issue of the presence and nature of the gods and their intervention in the affairs of mortal heroes. As every young reader who goes beyond his classroom assignment and plunges into the Homeric masterpieces with any degree of thoughtful attention soon discovers, the so-called "gods" of the Homeric world are not safely ensconced in their Olympian fastness far from the toil of earthly existence, but are very deeply enmeshed in both the joys and the pain of the mortal world. On the one hand, they are tied to the principal heroes by contrived affinities of blood or other fleshly concourse, and more tellingly, they are pointedly subject to the same flaws of human character and limitations of human capacity that afflict their mortal brethren. Here again, the central role of the gods in the playing out of the human drama, and the frequent crossing of the boundary between the divine and the human, is visibly absent in all but a few of the most unabashedly mythological of the *Shijing* poems. Whether the divine figures, whose names and shreds of their lost narratives pop up in certain archaic and non-canonical sources, had been systematically purged from the canonical texts of the "High Tradition" in the name of Confucian rationalism, as has been suggested, or their non-appearance reflects something more deeply ingrained in Chinese cultural paradigms, the identifiable "gods" of early Chinese lore barely show up on the screen of literary representation – not as objects of pious veneration, not even as objects of parodic debunking.

Nevertheless, the question of supernatural intervention in the human story does become more germane to our discussion with respect to the ways in which the notion of "Heaven" figures in early Chinese writings. In spite of the almost reflexive tendency, in both native and foreign sinological apologetics, to dismiss the invocation of "Heaven" as an impersonal place-holder for Nature or the "natural" cosmic order, the term *Tian* often occurs in contexts and in formulations not entirely free of the taint of anthropomorphism, occasionally even letting slip certain implications of Heaven as a source of creation, or at least an embodiment of the uncreated universal order. True, we are usually careful to insist that *Tian* is, with few exceptions, never deified as an object of worship in ancient China, but it continues to stand, in numerous early texts, as the supreme source of moral authority in the world.[2] This point takes on particular significance in our comparative discussion of the *Shijing* and the Homeric corpus with respect to the issue of the intervention of the Olympian gods in human affairs. While Heaven may never be personified as an actor on the plane of the heroic deeds celebrated in the Zhou Dynastic Hymns, the connection between Heaven and "fate" does serve to convey a diffuse sense of ineluctable destiny that may be fruitfully compared to the Homeric notion of *moira* frequently dramatized in the destructive meddling of the gods in human affairs. As Li Wai-yee astutely observes, the notion of Heaven is often invoked in the vestigial narratives of the Dynastic Hymns in a manner that sharply circumscribes the individual agency of the sage-kings and diminishes the glory of their greatest triumphs. This, finally, brings us back to a primary feature of the greatest exemplars of epic literature that is shared even by the patently non-epic heroes of the *Shijing* Hymns, since here, too, the potentially limitless capacity of heroic attainment is ultimately pulled up short and poignantly checked by the stark limitations on human capacity imposed by the constraints of mortal existence – whether these are conceived in terms of deterministic forces of nature, history, and divine intervention, or are ascribed to the intrinsic weakness of the flesh and the soul.

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[2] We are talking here, of course, about *Tian* qua Heaven, and not the deified Zhou ancestor with the name *Tian*.

1

HOMERIC VALUES AND THE VIRTUES OF KINGSHIP

Douglas L. CAIRNS

Introduction

The *Iliad* and *Odyssey* are exemplary poems, as their own use of the exemplary mode at prominent junctures of their narratives confirms.[1] Their utility as *exempla*, especially for leaders and rulers, is a commonplace of Homeric criticism from the fourth century BC onwards.[2] For us, Philodemus' monograph *On the Good King according to Homer* is perhaps the most salient representative of this tradition,[3] but it was by no means the only one. It is clearly a central element of the relation between the Homeric poems and their audiences that they raise and encourage engagement with moral and political issues. Clearly, too, they prompt reflection on kingship and imply normative concepts of leadership. It is the purpose of this chapter to explore the general outlines of the poems' moral and political values with particular reference to their ideals of leadership and the relation between leaders and led. The history of Homeric interpretation, however, indicates what a complex and contested task it is to infer the relevant norms from the texts themselves. It also reveals the extent to which attempts to do so, from antiquity to the present, are inevitably conditioned by the social and moral norms of the interpreter and the community to which he or she belongs. Despite the immediacy of their appeal and the clarity, in broad outline, of their ethical sympathies, these are dense and multifaceted texts of inexhaustible richness of texture. They invite disagreement and debate at least as much as they suggest particular conclusions. Any analysis of their values, then, and especially one as brief as this chapter will provide, must be partial and contingent.

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[1] On the exemplary nature of the *Iliad* in particular, see Howie 1995 and Cairns 2014.

[2] See, for example, Plato, *Ion* 540b, *Republic* 363b (citing *Odyssey* 19.107-114 and Hesiod, *Works and Days* 225-37); see also Xenophon, *Symposium* 4. 6 (citing *Iliad* 3.178-9).

[3] For Philodemus, *On the Good King according to Homer* (and its predecessors), see Murray 1965. For a text, see Dorandi 1982. For further discussion, see Gigante 1995, 63-78; also Asmis 1991; Fish 2004.

One reason why the relevant Homeric norms cannot simply be read off from the Homeric texts lies in those texts' form and structure as a mixture of (more or less equal proportions of) diegetic narrative and direct, mimetic speech. These are thus polyphonic texts, and, notoriously, the narrator very often leaves us to draw our own conclusions about characters' actions and motives from speeches, as well as from a wide range of non-verbal cues, whether in the main narrative or (especially) in speech-introductions.[4] A further major consideration, however, is that the narratives of both poems are premised on crises, major departures from the norms that might otherwise prevail. This is, of course, a central feature of the classic narrative form that these poems bequeath to the western canon. But it means that these are not straightforward eulogies of the virtues of the ideal leader and they do not simply represent kingly virtue in action. There is indeed a great deal of moralizing and much patent exemplarity; nonetheless, much that the poems have to tell us is furnished by indirection; and the norms and values that are presupposed by the characters and steer audiences' responses to the narratives often tend to emerge more in the breach than in the observance.

1. Ideals of leadership

Explicit statements of ideal standards of behavior certainly do exist in the poems. As far as the relationship between leaders and led is concerned, these are especially prominent in the *Odyssey*. One prominent and early example is the speech of Mentor in the Ithacan assembly of *Odyssey* 2, where the failure of the people of Ithaca to defend Odysseus' household against the depredations of Penelope's suitors, prompts the following complaint (2.230-4):[5]

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[4] Homeric narratology is now a large and diverse field of study. The classic work, however, remains De Jong 1987. For some idea of recent currents, see Cairns and Scodel 2014, especially Scodel 2014 on narrative techniques that particularly invite audience speculation on motivation and intention.

> 'No longer now let one who is a sceptred king (*basileus*) be eager
> to be gentle and kind, be one whose thought is schooled in justice,
> but let him always rather be harsh, and act severely,
> seeing the way no one of the people he was lord over
> remembers godlike Odysseus, and he was kind, like a father.'

Mentor's words underline the qualities of gentleness and kindness, similar to those of a father,[6] that should obtain between 'sceptred kings' and their people, and emphasize the importance of justice;[7] but they also invoke a relation of reciprocity between *basileus* and people that reflects the notion that the *basileus* should benefit the community and rule in their interests as well as in his own.[8] Mentor's frustrated and ironic inversion of the norms of leadership here is a rhetorical tactic that depends for its effectiveness on the wide endorsement of those norms and the attraction that they are felt to exert.

With this passage we can compare *Odyssey* 4.686-95, where Penelope complains to Medon, the suitors' herald, about their behavior:

> 'You, who keep gathering here, and consuming away much livelihood,
> the property of wise Telemachos, nor have you listened
> to what you heard from your fathers before you, when you were children,
> what kind of man Odysseus was among your own parents,
> how he did no act and spoke no word in his own country

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[5] Translations from Homer are by Richmond Lattimore (1951, 1967), with their original UK orthography.

[6] Cf. Telemachus at 2.46-7: 'I have lost a noble father, one who was king once over you here, and was kind to you like a father.' A good king is analogous to a father, but the analogy is limited to the ideal of kindness of which the father is a paradigm, and does not depend on a pervasive model of the state as family.

[7] For the scepter as a symbol of kings' juridical and political authority, see Van Wees 1992, 276-80; further references in Hammer 2002, 120-1.

[8] Mentor speaks these words *in propria persona*. Shortly thereafter it is his appearance that is assumed by the goddess Athena in her desire to encourage Telemachus and spur him on to action (2.267-95). This will be one reason why the lines spoken by Mentor at 2.230-4 are repeated verbatim by Athena (*in propria persona*) at *Od.* 5.8-12.

> that was unfair (*exaision*); and that is a way (*dikê*) divine kings have, one
> will be hateful to a certain man, and favour another,
> but Odysseus was never outrageous at all to any man.[9]
> But in you the spirit is plain to see, and your unjust actions (ἀεικέα ἔργα),
> how you have no gratitude (*charis*) thereafter for good things done you.'

Abuse of power is the norm (*dikê*) for kings in general,[10] leading them to partiality, inequity, and arrogance in their dealings with others. Odysseus, by contrast, is once again a paradigm of all that a *basileus* should be. Once again, too, the idea of a reciprocal relationship between *basileus* and community is central: the suitors have benefited from the climate that Odysseus created in the time of their fathers, but now show no *charis*, no gratitude. Instead, their behavior manifests the complete negation of that value, i.e. taking with no intention to return (686-7) and consuming the substance of their unwilling 'hosts'.[11] The suitors are failing in an obligation of reciprocity that derives from the relationship between their fathers and Odysseus as leader of their community, but that is an obligation that is clearly felt to obtain more generally as a norm of commensality among that community's leading men.

The still disguised Odysseus himself gives voice to related ideals much later in the poem, at the beginning of his extended conversation with his wife in Book 19 (107-14):

> 'Lady, no mortal man on the endless earth could have cause
> to find fault with you; your fame goes up into the wide heaven,
> as of some king who, as a blameless man and god-fearing,

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[9] οὔ ποτε πάμπαν ἀτάσθαλον ἄνδρα ἐώργει. On the adjective *atasthalos* (noun *atasthaliai*), see Cairns 2012, with further references.

[10] The notion that breach of norms is the norm, that failure to be *dikaios* is the *dikê* of kings, is no doubt an irony that Penelope is to be imagined as intending, even if *dikê* = 'norm', 'custom' is a regular Odyssean sense (S. West in Heubeck, West, and Hainsworth 1988, 237 on 4.691).

[11] What Sahlins 1974, 195 calls 'negative reciprocity'. Sahlins' negative reciprocity is not to be confused, though it often is, with the return of harm for harm. On his terminology, see Van Wees 1998, 22-4. On negative reciprocity in the *Iliad*, see further below.

> and ruling as lord over many powerful people,
> upholds the way of good government (*eudikia)*, and the black earth
> yields him
> barley and wheat, his trees are heavy with fruit, his sheepflocks
> continue to bear young, the sea gives him fish, because of
> his good leadership (*euêgêsia*), and his people prosper under him.’

In comparing Penelope to a king of the ideal type, whose piety, justice, and good leadership promote the flourishing of both land and people, Odysseus not only subtly praises his own rule, whose benefits will again be felt once the suitors’ subversion of the norms of leadership has been overcome, but also stirs his wife’s longing for the husband who embodies those norms.

These ideals are clearly traditional, and so also underpin the traditional hexameter poetry of Hesiod. We might compare *Works and Days* 225-47:[12]

> But those who give straight judgments to foreigners and fellow-citizens and do not turn aside from justice at all, their city blooms and the people in it flower. For them, Peace, the nurse of the young, is on the earth, and far-seeing Zeus never marks out painful war; nor does famine attend straight-judging men, nor calamity, but they share out in festivities the fruits of the labors they care for. For these the earth bears the means of life in abundance, and on the mountains the oak tree bears acorns on its surface, and bees in its center; their woolly sheep are weighed down by their fleeces; and their wives give birth to children who resemble their parents. And they do not go onto ships, for the grain-giving field bears them crops. But to those who care only for evil outrageousness and cruel deeds, far-seeing Zeus, Cronus’ son, marks out justice. Often even a whole city suffers because of an evil man who sins and devises wicked deeds. Upon them, Cronus’s son brings forth woe from the sky, famine together with pestilence, and the people die away; the women do not give birth, and the households are diminished by the plans of Olympian Zeus. And at another time Cronus’ son destroys their broad army or their wall, or he takes vengeance upon their ships on the sea.

As in the passage from *Odyssey* 19, the giving of straight justice (the task of kings, though that is not explicitly stated in this passage) brings prosperity (225-37); injustice brings disaster (238-47); and all this is a lesson for the kings, those bribe-eaters (264; cf. 39, 221), to give straight rather than crooked *dikai* (248-73), for otherwise their entire communities will suffer.[13]

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[12] Translations from Hesiod are from Most 2006.

For more on the relation between kings and the gods, especially Zeus, we turn to the *Theogony* (71-4):

> He [Zeus] is king in the sky, holding the thunder and the blazing thunderbolt himself, since he gained victory in supremacy over his father Cronus; and he distributed well all things alike to the immortals and devised their honors.

The gods are a family, not a state, and Zeus is (elsewhere) father of gods and men (rather than *king* of gods and men). But as the successor of his father, and father of the Muses and other divinities, Zeus rules in heaven (οὐρανῷ ἐμβασιλεύει, 71), and this passage clearly indicates the ways in which Zeus may be a model for mortal kings. His thunderbolt is analogous to the scepter that, as we have seen, is the symbol of human kingship; and it is by virtue of his favor that mortal *basilêes* wield that scepter. In exercising the power of which the scepter is a symbol, human kings should also resemble Zeus, for his rule entails a proper distribution of *timai* (honors) to his peers and subjects. These 'honors' involve not just the respect of others, but also the right to such respect, a right that one enjoys by virtue of one's exercising a particular role in a given area of activity.[14]

In this context of the *Theogony* prologue, however, it is the Muses, Zeus' daughters, who are the immediate vehicles of divine favor, and they have a particular concern not only for bards, but also for kings (81-92):

> Whomever among Zeus-nourished kings the daughters of great Zeus honor and behold when he is born, they pour sweet dew upon his tongue and his words flow soothingly from his mouth. All the populace look to him as he decides disputes with straight judgments; and speak-

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[13] We can also compare the well-known simile of Zeus' anger at (and collective punishment of) human injustice at *Il.* 16.384-92. For the position that this reflects a common stock of ideas, shared by the Homeric and Hesiod poems, rather than 'interpolation' of Hesiodic elements in Homer, see Janko 1992, 365-6.

[14] On Homeric honor, see further Adkins 1960, Riedinger 1976, Van Wees 1992, esp. 69-77.

> ing publicly without erring, he quickly ends even a great quarrel by his skill. For this is why kings are wise, because when the populace is being harmed in the assembly they easily manage to turn the deeds around, effecting persuasion with mild words; and as he goes up to the gathering they seek his favor like a god with soothing reverence (*aidôs*), and he is conspicuous among the assembled people.

This divine favor, deriving ultimately from Zeus' support for the authority and position of the *basileus*, both underpins the qualities that, as we saw from the *Odyssey*, kings should possess, and creates the special affinity between poets and kings that Hesiod wishes to exploit in his prologue. There is clearly a relationship between this passage and Odysseus' rebuke to the tactless Phaeacian, Euryalus, in *Odyssey* 8, albeit that the latter is not explicitly about kingship as such (8.169-73):

> 'For there is a certain kind of man, less noted for beauty,
> but the god puts comeliness on his words, and they who look toward him
> are filled with joy at the sight, and he speaks to them without faltering
> in winning modesty (*aidôs*), and shines among those who are gathered,
> and people look on him as a god when he walks in the city.' [15]

Both passages make clear the importance of what we would probably call 'charisma' in the ideals of leadership deployed in both Homer and Hesiod. With charisma belongs eloquence, and with eloquence belong equity, mildness, and the wisdom and tact that are required to resolve disputes. These are precisely the qualities that are commended as the hallmarks of good leadership according to Homer in later authors.[16]

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[15] For similar language, used simply of an individual who enjoys the respect of the populace, cf. *Od.* 8.169-73.

[16] See Philodemus XXVIII,21-XXIX,31, XLI,21-23, on the prudence of Odysseus and Nestor, with Murray 1965, 168, Dorandi 1982, 177-9, 206, and Montiglio 2011, 106, 100-1, 110-11, 132. Cf. Horace *Ep.* 1.2.11-18, with Gigante 1995, 76-7. For Odysseus as an *exemplum* of kingship/leadership, see the Roman, Stoicizing examples in Stanford 1963, 121-5, and the comprehensive account of his place in ancient thought (from the Socratic Antisthenes onwards) in Montiglio 2011.

2. Problematizations

The Odyssean and Hesiodic ideals of leadership that we have identified are by no means absent from the *Iliad*. But it is not just that we can find isolated resonances in this or that passage. Rather, the *Iliad* embodies these ideals in dramatic, dynamic, and exploratory fashion. In that poem, the focus is less on actually depicting the king in ideal form as a wise ruler, arbiter, and judge; as someone who enjoys a good relationship with the gods; as the gods' avatar on earth; or even as an inspiring military leader (though kings do plenty of fighting, and there is no suppression of the leaders' military role). It is much more on the leader as one among many, on his complex interactions with others of the same or similar rank and with the community, whether political or military. The *Iliad* explores the qualities of leadership in a fundamentally political sense – by portraying leaders' attempts to come to terms with a world of competing interests and claims.[17]

a. *polykoiraniê*

Before we explore this topic in detail, however, a brief specification is necessary. We have been using the term 'kingship', but in both poems this is kingship without monarchy. There are communities of kings: Agamemnon and Achilles (like the other leaders of the army's contingents) are *basilêes*; not only Odysseus, but also the suitors are *basilêes*.[18] Constitutionally, this picture is notoriously vague, and many find it difficult to envisage as a direct reflection of any particular historical form of political organization.[19] Within the fictional world of the poems, however, things are clear: we are dealing with a plurality of *basilêes* – Odysseus decries *polykoiraniê* at *Il.* 2.204,[20] but the many communities of leaders and led on the Achaean side at Troy make up a larger community in which *polykoiraniê* is very much a live issue. This picture is possibly best explained as involving the coalescence of dimly perceived or fantasized models, associated with earlier periods, with the realities of the contemporary politics of the monumental poems' earliest audiences, perhaps in a world in which independent heads of household and loose confederations of local big men were implicated in some kind of larger entity – perhaps what we might regard as an early archaic *koinon* or some form of emergent *polis*.[21] Homer's first audiences, I suspect, will have regarded Homeric society as a fictionalized and fantasized version of the kind of society that seems to lie behind the *Works and Days*.

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[17] See Hammer 2002, Allan and Cairns 2011.

[18] E.g. *Od.* 1.394-6, and cf. the situation in the land of the Phaeacians (*Od.* 7.189-91, 8.41-7, 390-1) and at Troy (*Il.* 4.96, 20. 84).

[19] For the search for an understanding of the term *basileus* that will accommodate the Homeric plurality of *basilêes,* see Drews 1983, 98-115; Carlier 1984, 136-230; Van Wees 1992, 31-36, 78-89, 274-6; Van Wees 2011.

[20] Odysseus' intervention (at 2.188-206) contrasts the superior *timê* of kings, which is granted them by Zeus and which underpins their political and juridical supremacy, with the inferiority of the common soldier in battle and in council: *polykoiraniê* is opposed not to absolute monarchy, but to the preeminence of the plurality of *basilêes* among whom one is supreme. Odysseus'

Like a peace-time *polis*, the Achaean army at Troy not only has a council of elders, senior advisers to Agamemnon as overall leader of the enterprise, but also refers important issues of strategy and policy to regular assemblies, which all members of the host are apparently entitled to attend and at which all leading figures have an equal right to speak. Though the right to take the scepter and address the assembly is, in normal circumstances, a privilege of *basilêes*, the opinion of the army as a whole also matters in so far as its approbation or otherwise is, or should be, a factor in the final decision.[22] It is in an assembly of this sort that the Iliadic dispute between Agamemnon and Achilles erupts.

Agamemnon, who, with his brother Menelaus, is the instigator of the expedition against Troy, is in some sense regarded as its supreme leader, but Achilles too, like the other leaders of the force's various contingents, is also a *basileus*. Agamemnon may be, as Nestor says (1. 278-9), a 'sceptred king', endorsed by Zeus, whose share of *timê* can-

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differential treatment of the two categories (soft words for the 'king, or man of influence', 188; physical violence and verbal abuse for the 'man of the people', 198) itself enacts two very different levels of *timê*. This approach makes it clear that there is felt to be an unbridgeable gulf in status between *basilêes* and commoners, a point that is rammed home in the wider context by his treatment of the unruly Thersites, a rare voice of dissent among the rank and file, at 2.211-77.

[21] For some good thoughts about how one might begin to think about the relation of the Homeric-Hesiodic picture of kingship and early archaic realities, see Forrest 2000. More broadly, on the historicity or otherwise of Homeric society, see Morris 2001, with further references in Cairns 2001a, 4-6, 12-13, 23-4.

[22] See Flaig 1994; Hammer 2002, 153-60; Elmer 2013.

not be matched; he may be (as Agamemnon himself puts it) 'more kingly' (*basileuteros*, 9.160); but other 'kings' also have their claims. The dispute arises over *gera* ('prizes', 'privileges', marks of distinction; in this case, captive women) that serve as the army's concrete and visible recognition of prowess in battle and the status of its leaders. The qualities that these *gera* recognize are plural; this, it emerges, is an underlying source of friction between Achilles and Agamemnon, as each privileges the basis of his own claim – prowess on Achilles' part and rank on Agamemnon's – and disparages that of the other.[23] The development of the quarrel, from the issue of *gera* to that of the disputants' respective claims to leadership, indicates the pluralism of Homeric values: though both Achilles and Agamemnon are *agathos* (indeed, each claims to be most *agathos*, 'best of the Achaeans'), they are so for different reasons, and their *aretê* cannot be rated on a single scale of value.[24] Though the quarrel is, in principle, resolvable, the relative value of rank *versus* prowess is not. In an intervention designed to resolve the quarrel, the elderly and wise adviser, Nestor, acknowledges both claims and requests each party to respect the other's (1.274-84):

> 'Do you also obey, since to be persuaded is better.
> You, great man (*agathos*) that you are, yet do not take the girl away
> but let her be, a prize as the sons of the Achaians gave her
> first. Nor, son of Peleus, think to match your strength with
> the king, since never equal with the rest is the portion of honor (*timê*)
> of the sceptred king to whom Zeus gives magnificence (*kydos*). Even
> though you are the stronger man, and the mother who bore you
>   was immortal,
> yet is this man greater who is lord over more than you rule.
> Son of Atreus, give up your anger; even I entreat you
> to give over your bitterness against Achilleus, he who
> stands as a great bulwark of battle over all the Achaians.'

Agamemnon's rank gives him an unequalled amount of *timê*, but this does not mean that Achilles' prowess is not also a claim to *timê* or that the matter can simply be settled by measuring the *timê* of each. *Timê* is not a single currency through which these claims can be made commensurable. Agamemnon's greater *timê*, *qua* 'sceptred king', does not silence Achilles' claims or support Agamemnon's breach of communal norms and protocols. Nestor underlines the legitimacy of each claim, which means that he does not wholly endorse either to the total detriment of the other.

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[23] See *Il.* 1.149-51, 160-8, 177-8, 186-7, 225-32, 287-91; cf. 342-4, 410-12.

[24] 'Best of the Achaeans': see 1.91 (Agamemnon), 244 (Achilles), 412 (Achilles). On the pluralism of Iliadic values, see Hammer 2002, 81-92, Wilson 2002, 36-8 and passim; contrast Apfel 2011, 213-30.

That Agamemnon's behavior in *Iliad* 1 represents a failure to match Homeric ideals of leadership is apparent in many ways. First, he disregards the assembly's universal view that he should accept Chryses' ransom for the return of his daughter: the priest approaches the whole assembly, especially, but not only, the leaders of the expedition, Agamemnon and Menelaus (1.15-17); the entire assembly 'vote', by acclamation, to accept his supplication (1.22-3), but Agamemnon ignores their opinion (1.24). Instead, he reacts with a harshness that, as we saw above, is the antithesis of the Odyssean ideal of kingship, sending the old man away *kakôs* ('badly', i.e. with a disrespect for the priest and his appeal that reflects poorly on Agamemnon himself), with a 'strong order' (25) that insults the priest's status (28), threatens him with violence (32), and brutally revels in the very source of the old man's sorrow, his permanent separation from a daughter who is to become a household and sexual slave in a far-off country (29-31). Agamemnon's failure to recognize that dishonoring a priest of Apollo is also to dishonor the god (1.11, 21) is not merely imprudent, but also an offense towards a superior whose right to deference is unambiguous. As the quarrel with Achilles develops, Agamemnon's threat simply to seize Achilles' *geras*, regardless of the protocols for the distribution of such prizes, is a clear violation of a norm. In the presentation of this behavior, the important terms are not *aretê* and *aischron*, but those which emphasize that the distribution of *gera* is carried out in the name of the army as a whole and highlight the arbitrariness of the proposal to seize Briseis.[25] Achilles' observation that 'the sons of the Achaians' gave him Briseis (162) is itself a moral argument: a distribution made in the name of the collective should not be unmade by the arbitrary fiat of the king. This is the force of the adverb 'first' in Nestor's observation, part of his attempt to dissuade Agamemnon from following through on his threat, that 'the sons of the Achaians gave [the girl to Achilles] first' (1. 276); the distribution has been made by the appropriate methods and in accordance with the appropriate norms, and it is now improper to undo it. These are norms that Agamemnon himself acknowledges: when first faced with the prospect of giving up his own *geras* (having rejected Chryses' offer of 'boundless ransom' and thus incurring the wrath of Apollo, which forces him to give up his prize 'without price, without ransom', 1.99), he declares that he is prepared to do so, provided that the army, as a collective, compensate him (1.118-20, cf. Achilles at 1. 123-9), showing that he too accepts that the norm here is of one communal distribution. The arbitrariness of Agamemnon's disregard of protocol is summed up in his own and others' use of *autos* (self) in phrases such as 'I'll take her myself' (137) or 'going myself to your shelter' (185). These emphasize the illegitimacy of 'just taking' – with no intention to return – in a society in which reciprocity is the norm. These phrases highlight the arbitrary action of a king who puts him*self*, *self*ishly, before communal norms and his obligations to others. In using such phrases, Agamemnon admits the illegitimacy of his action. He no longer cares about ethics or protocol, as he openly acknowledges at 1.184-7:

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[25] *Gera* awarded by the army as a whole: *Il.* 1.123, 127-8, 135, 162, 276; instead, Agamemnon will 'just take', acting 'by himself' (*autos*): 1.137-9, 184-5, 324-5, 356, 507; cf. 2.240, 9.106-7. See Van Wees 1992, 299-310 (esp. 307-10) on the distribution of prizes; Teffeteller 1990, Howie 1995, 149-50, on 'taking by oneself'; Allan and Cairns 2011, 114-15, on both.

> 'I shall take the fair-cheeked Briseis,
> your prize, I myself (*autos*) going to your shelter, that you may learn well
> how much greater I am than you, and another man may shrink back
> from likening himself to me and contending against me.'

By now, the issue in the quarrel has shifted from the merely local one of the distribution of *gera* to a more fundamental one of Agamemnon's insistence on acknowledgement of his rank and precedence. At this stage, however, the normative factors are largely on Achilles' side. Agamemnon's words do not justify a breach of those norms in defense of some alternative or higher principle, but merely express his conviction that, in pursuit of his own interests and to demonstrate his power, he is able to violate communal norms with impunity. His status and the power it entails are legitimate and command respect, as Nestor emphasizes; but Agamemnon abuses his powers.

That he cannot, in fact, do so with impunity is precisely what Achilles, by withdrawing from the fighting, seeks to demonstrate: Agamemnon will 'eat out [his] heart in sorrow, that [he] paid no honor to the best of the Achaians' (1.243-4); he will recognize his disastrous error (*atê*, 1.411-12).[26] Agamemnon admits his *atê* in Book 9 (115-20), after the tide of battle has turned in favor of the Trojans and he has been humiliated in an assembly, but he concedes gratuitous harm, in violation of the norms of reciprocity, as early as 2.375-8, when he ruefully reflects on the troubles that derive from ill-judged quarrels, such as the one between himself and Achilles – 'and I was the one that started it' (ἐγὼ δ' ἦρχον χαλεπαίνων, 378). The importance of 'starting it', of negative reciprocity, in Homeric ethics is demonstrated at the very conclusion of the quarrel in Book 19, where Odysseus' explicit condemnation of Agamemnon's behavior provides, in effect, the last word on the subject (19.181-3):

> 'And you, son of Atreus, after this be more righteous (*dikaios*) to another
> man. For there is no fault [i.e. no one will feel *nemesis*] when even one who is a king
> appeases a man, when the king was the first one to be angry (ὅτε τις πρότερος χαλεπήνῃ).'

The same ethic of reciprocity also underpins the *Odyssey*, where the offense of the suitors is likewise taking with no intention to return – they consume the food and drink of Odysseus' household without making any contribution of their own or taking their feasting to each other's house in turn (1.374-5 = 2.139-40; cf. 4.621-3, etc.).[27] Their gratuitous offense legitimizes the retaliation of Odysseus and Telemachus. Similarly, in the *Iliad*, the expedition against Troy is presented as legitimate retaliation for the offense of Paris, and there is understanding for the retaliation of Achilles, at least until he refuses settlement (9. 523). The *Iliad*, in fact, has more to say about the non-violent settlement of disputes than the apparently more peaceful and moralistic *Odyssey*.[28] The Shield of Achilles, a *tour de force* of the hexameter poet's ability to make the verbal visual (what ancient critics called *enargeia*), depicts both a city at war and a city at peace, thus setting the artifact itself and the use for which it is designed in a more inclusive context, emphasizing the benefits that war may be intended to secure, but often destroys.[29] The depiction of the city at peace includes a quasi- or proto-judicial trial scene (18.497-508), in which a homicide case (or perhaps a dispute arising from a previous attempt to settle such a case) is referred to a panel of elders, sitting in a sacred circle of polished stones, for adjudication. Though the details of the scene are complex and disputed, the emphasis on due process as a mark of civilization is evident. Ajax refers to a similar mechanism for resolving homicide disputes as a means of condemning Achilles' refusal to settle in the Embassy episode in Book 9 (632-6). A preference for compromise over escalation at the interpersonal level also emerges from Diomedes' reaction to an insult from Agamemnon in Book 4 (365-418), where, 'in awe before the majesty of the king's rebuking' (i.e. out of respect, *aidôs*, for a rebuke delivered by someone with a claim to such respect, someone *aidoios*, 402), the younger warrior refuses to respond. Diomedes' circumspect silence contrasts both with an indignant response in the immediate context (on the part of his companion, Sthenelus) and with Achilles' in Book 1. In a similar way, disputes during the funeral games of Patroclus are settled without violence and with the face of both parties intact (23.473-98, 541-613).[30] This is a recurrent ideal.[31] Achilles miscalculates when he thinks that he will only achieve satisfaction when the suffering of his comrades results in Agamemnon's humiliation (above); and in the end he settles for a face-saving performance in which Agamemnon is permitted to disclaim responsibility, and he himself not only accepts this, but even indulges in some exculpatory mythologizing of his own (19.78-275). Despite the *Iliad*'s violence, and despite the attraction of self-assertive and agonistic values, settlement of disputes without violence, in the interests of the community, and with concern for the face of both parties is an ideal espoused by the characters and apparently vindicated by the thrust of the narrative.

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[26] On this concept, see Cairns 2012.

[27] See esp. Saïd 1979.

[28] See Ulf 1990, and cf. Cairns 2001b, Allan and Cairns 2011.

Accordingly, the main *exempla* of good kingship are Nestor in *Iliad* 1 and Odysseus in *Iliad* 19. The Iliadic Odysseus' qualities as a leader are apparent in his intervention to ensure that the quarrel between Achilles and Agamemnon is definitively resolved (with both communal protocols and private reconciliation) and in the firmness with which he takes charge of that whole process, quietly refuting Agamemnon's claim that the quarrel was not really his fault and resisting Achilles' impatient desire to get the whole thing over with so that he can return to the fighting. Here he shows qualities that first became prominent in *Iliad* 2 (169-393), when it is he and Nestor who retrieve the situation following Agamemnon's disastrous attempt to test the army. That is the first occasion on which Agamemnon suggests abandoning the war and going home. When he suggests the same thing for a third time, Odysseus all but relieves him of his command, pronouncing him unworthy of his position (14.82-102). If Agamemnon is weighed as a leader and found wanting, a large part of this is the contrast that emerges between him and Odysseus. Any reader of the *Odyssey* who knows the *Iliad* is already primed to accept the later poem's presentation of Odysseus as a paradigm of the good king.

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[29] The best introduction to the Shield is still Taplin 2001.

[30] See Allan and Cairns 2011, 133-7.

[31] See Scodel 2008.

Nestor, the other *exemplum* of good kingship, not only exemplifies the virtues of mediator and counsellor that are extolled in the normative passages with which we began, he also has those passages' more personal attributes too. Where Achilles and Agamemnon give way to their passions, allowing their rage to undermine the political processes and protocols in which they are involved, Nestor is 'fair-spoken', a 'lucid speaker, from whose lips the stream of words ran sweeter than honey' (1.249). His age gives him the wisdom that is required for resolving disputes (250). And he speaks to both parties 'in kind intention' (253). The *Iliad*'s first book demonstrates what the rest of the poem bears out – though leadership is not by any means the only important virtue, in terms of the qualities to which the Homeric king should aspire, the poem's best examples are not the Achaeans' supreme leader or their best fighter, but men like Nestor and Odysseus. This is also the verdict of antiquity;[32] and we should accept it.

b. Honor, glory, and the community in the **Iliad**

Apart from the problem of the competing claims of a plurality of leaders, there is the second problem of the tension between the leaders' self-interest and their obligation to the community to which they belong. One perspective on the relationship between king and community is given in the celebrated speech of the Lycian hero and son of Zeus, Sarpedon, in *Iliad* 12 (310-28):

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[32] Murray 1965, 170.

> ‘Glaukos, why is it you and I are honored before others
> with pride of place, the choice meats and the filled wine cups
> in Lykia, and all men look on us as if we were immortals,
> and we are appointed a great piece of land by the banks of Xanthos,
> good land, orchard and vineyard, and ploughland for the planting of
> wheat?
> Therefore it is our duty (χρή) in the forefront of the Lykians
> to take our stand, and bear our part of the blazing of battle,
> so that a man of the close-armoured Lykians may say of us:
> “Indeed, these are no ignoble men who are lords of Lykia,
> these kings of ours, who feed upon the fat sheep appointed
> and drink the exquisite sweet wine, since indeed there is strength
> of valour in them, since they fight in the forefront of the Lykians.”
> Man, supposing you and I, escaping this battle,
> would be able to live on forever, ageless, immortal,
> so neither would I myself go on fighting in the foremost
> nor would I urge you into the fighting where men win glory (*kydos*).
> But now, seeing that the spirits of death stand close about us
> in their thousands, no man can turn aside nor escape them,
> let us go on and win glory (*euchos*) for ourselves, or yield it to others.’

The passage is instructive in a good many respects. First, we see that the deference (*timê*) that kings receive from their people can be expressed in both material and non-material terms. That deference, Sarpedon continues, depends on the kings’ prowess in battle. The reciprocal relationship between king and people that we saw to be central to the *Odyssey*’s ideology of kingship here emerges in a different guise: kings fight, and in return they receive honor. It would be possible to frame this relationship in terms of the protection that kings’ prowess affords (see further below); but this is not how Sarpedon chooses to present it. In his view, the Lycians honor their kings not (or at least not explicitly) because their warcraft keeps the community safe, but simply because outstanding valor, the willingness to risk one’s life in the front ranks, in itself merits reward. The community is represented as having an interest in the glory (*kydos*, 325) and success (*euchos* – the boast of having slain one’s opponent, 328) that constitute the warrior’s primary motivation for fighting. That motive, in turn, is defined by its relation to human mortality: if one did not have to die, but could live on ageless and immortal (like the gods), no one would exchange life for the glory to be won in battle. As it is, however, all men must die, and so risking one’s life for glory brings an added form of value, not just in the *timê* that one receives from one's community while one lives, but also in the fame that endures after death – the unspoken assumption of Sarpedon's argument is that *kleos*, fame and reputation, outlives those who win glory in battle.[33]

Sarpedon accepts these norms with equanimity, and his use of them as a means of exhorting his comrade, Glaucus, makes them seem unproblematic. But to a very large extent it is the way in which the *Iliad* probes the meaning of the heroic quest for glory that gives the poem its well-known tragic flavor.[34] The choice that Sarpedon has made, and that all heroes re-enact when they enter battle, as Sarpedon says, to win glory for themselves or to yield it to others, is one that animates the role of Achilles. One major reason why Achilles is so incensed by the insult he suffers at the hands of Agamemnon in *Iliad* 1 (in being deprived of a captive woman awarded him in recognition of his prowess in battle) is that it undermines his own acceptance of the heroic choice of glory over longevity. For him, death at Troy as the culmination of a short, but glorious existence is a commitment that he has already made, a decision that he has already taken. Unlike other heroes, who make such choices in ignorance of the outcome, Achilles knows that only two possible trajectories are open to him (*Il.* 9.410-16):

> For my mother Thetis the goddess of the silver feet tells me
> I carry two sorts of destiny toward the day of my death. Either,
> if I stay here and fight beside the city of the Trojans,
> my return home is gone, but my glory (*kleos*) shall be everlasting;
> but if I return home to the beloved land of my fathers,
> the excellence of my glory (*kleos*) is gone, but there will be a long life
> left for me, and my end in death will not come to me quickly.'

Achilles' very presence at Troy reveals that he has already made that choice; and yet Agamemnon has treated him like a nobody (1.231, 293), like a rootless refugee, someone completely without honor (9.648, 16.59). Achilles' prodigious, quasi-divine fury, the fury that motivates his withdrawal from the fighting following Agamemnon's insult in *Iliad* 1, indicates his commitment to an identity in which *kleos* is definitive. Having made that commitment, he expects the *timê* (of the community, *via* the distribution of prizes) that Sarpedon represents as the reward of heroism. But in *Iliad* 1, Agamemnon overturns an earlier distribution of prizes, and the community of the Achaeans does nothing to stop him. Achilles' retaliation is designed to demonstrate that Agamemnon needs him, that the Achaeans will fare badly in the war without him. This, Achilles thinks, will demonstrate Agamemnon's shortcomings as a leader (1.240-4, 408-12).

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[33] Succinctly on *kydos* and *kleos*, with references, see Martin 2011, Beck 2011.

[34] See Redfield 1994, Rutherford 2001.

For those shortcomings to become apparent, however, many of Agamemnon's followers, Achilles' own comrades, will have to die. This is an outcome about which Achilles appears sanguine in *Iliad* 1 (242-3, 409-10). Once the consequences of his withdrawal begin to become apparent, however, solidarity among comrades becomes central to the community's attempts, *via* the embassy of *Iliad* 9, to persuade him to return to the fighting. Crucially, the ambassadors' appeals rest on aspects of the notion of honor that act as a counterweight to Achilles' focus on Agamemnon's insult and the loss of esteem that it entailed. All three speakers emphasize this point,[35] but it is Ajax, the last of them to speak, who puts it most succinctly: Achilles, he says, 'is hard, and does not remember that friends' affection | wherein we honored him by the ships, far beyond all others . . .' (*Il.* 9.630-1). He concludes with a direct appeal to Achilles (640-2):

> 'Respect your own house; see, we are under the same roof with you,
> from the multitude of the Danaans, we who desire beyond all
> others to have your honor and love, out of all the Achaians.'

Respect (*aidôs*) is central to the relationship of reciprocity that obtains among friends and comrades (*philoi*).[36] Homeric friendship (*philotês*) is a matter of mutual esteem, or *timê*. Not only do one's *philoi* constitute a central constituency in the awarding of *timê*, but it is a demand of one's own commitment to *timê* that one should recognize the *timê* of one's *philoi*.

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[35] See Odysseus at 9.247-60, 300-3, Phoenix at 496-7, 517-18, 520-3, 585-6.

[36] *Aidôs* is intimately related to *timê*, in two ways: first, it is the emotion that is aroused at the prospect of one's own *timê* being diminished (in which sense we translate it in English as 'shame'); but it is also the emotion that recognizes the *timê* of others (hence the translation 'respect'). See Cairns 1993, with brief summaries in Cairns 2011a and 2011b.

The force of this requirement becomes apparent to Achilles, however, only with the loss of his dearest *philos*, Patroclus. After he has heard of Patroclus' death, Achilles' mother, Thetis, observes that Zeus has fulfilled his promise to honor him by favoring the Trojans against the Achaeans (*Il.* 18.74-7). But that no longer means anything to her son (18.79-83). As a result, Achilles revisits his heroic choice and the priorities that have driven it (18.88-93):

> 'As it is, there must be on your heart a numberless sorrow
> for your son's death, since you can never again receive him
> won home again to his country; since the spirit within does not drive
> me
> to go on living and be among men, except on condition
> that Hektor first be beaten down under my spear, lose his life
> and pay the price for stripping Patroklos, the son of Menoitios.'

Now the apparent choice is between death and the only thing that would make life worth living, namely vengeance on Hector for the dishonor he imposed on Patroclus by stripping his body of Achilles' armor. This is an affront to Achilles' own honor, but one that emphasizes that this honor is not a purely individual thing – it is bound up also in his relationships with his friends, especially with the comrade who entered battle in Achilles' stead, wearing Achilles' own armor. Thetis points out, however, that achievement of vengeance itself will be followed by Achilles' death (18.94-6). To which Achilles replies (18.98-104):

> 'I must die soon, then; since I was not to stand by my companion
> when he was killed. And now, far away from the land of his fathers,
> he has perished, and lacked my fighting strength to defend him.
> Now, since I am not going back to the beloved land of my fathers,
> since I was no light of safety to Patroklos, nor to my other
> companions, who in their numbers went down before glorious Hektor,
> but sit here beside my ships, a useless weight on the good
> land . . .'

Achilles now accepts an early death, not purely because it is the means to glory, but because it is a consequence of what he most wants, vengeance upon Hector. Achilles delivers these lines in great agitation (μέγ' ὀχθήσας, 97), but the narrator leaves the audience to decide for themselves how to interpret his references to his failure to protect Patroclus (98-100), to the deaths of large numbers of his other companions for whom he was no light of safety (102-3), while he sat idle, a useless burden on the land (104). Homeric Greek has no words for regret, remorse, or guilt; its words for shame are not used retrospectively of one's own past actions. When the ambassadors in Book 9 warn Achilles that he may come to regret his refusal to accept reconciliation with Agamemnon, they refer in general terms to *achos* (sorrow or distress) over an evil that can no longer be healed (9.249-50), or warn of the harm (*blabê*) that befalls those who reject others' attempts to make reparation (9.502-12). Achilles' self-reproach, however, is clear; he recognizes that the outcome against which the ambassadors had tried to warn him has come to pass, but also that his own prayer for the destruction of his comrades, his own withdrawal from the fighting, has led to a situation in which letting down his comrades in general has had as a consequence the loss of his dearest friend.[37] The loss of self-esteem that this entails is palpable in his words, especially in his description of himself as a useless burden on the land (18.104). Thus Achilles' honor has been compromised not, as in Book 1, by a direct insult, and not only by the indirect but still personal affront that consists in Hector's stripping of Patroclus' body, but also by his own failings. Other people are not just a source of the esteem that the hero craves; there are others to whom the hero also has obligations, obligations that themselves depend on mutual esteem and whose neglect can mean a loss of both others' esteem and one's own.

As in the uncomplicated formulation of Sarpedon, the life of honor and glory takes its meaning from the inevitability of death. It is not that Achilles is no longer interested in glory – as he renounces his anger towards Agamemnon (112-13) and accepts the imminent death that vengeance upon Hector entails (115-21), he also looks forward to 'good fame' (*kleos esthlon*, 121) for killing Trojans, and ultimately for killing Hector. It is just that now *kleos esthlon* is no longer a simple matter of fighting well and accepting the risk of an early death – it now involves assuaging the loss of self-esteem that has resulted from an excessively narrow focus on individual *timê*.

Achilles does in the end kill Hector, winning great *kydos* (22.393). But he also attempts to dishonor his body, seeking to emphasize the gulf in esteem between Patroclus, who receives a full honorific burial, and his killer, whose body is dragged round the walls of Troy and left face down in the dust (22.395-405, 24.14-21). This, the god Apollo points out, does him no credit (24.52); it suggests that Achilles is not only without pity, but also without *aidôs*, the sense of honor (24.44). In making the arrangements that will ensure Achilles' return of Hector's body, however, Zeus indicates that this action, too, will bring Achilles *kydos* (24.109-10):

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[37] Cf. his denunciation of anger (*cholos*) at 107-11, now that it has cost him his dearest friend. On the poem's recurrent antithesis between anger and *philotês*, see Mullner 1996, 133-75.

> '[The other gods] keep urging clear-sighted Argeïphontes to steal the body,
> but I am going to attach this glory (*kydos*) to Achilleus [i.e. of returning the body voluntarily].'

When Priam comes in supplication to secure the release of the body, he confirms that his appeal is fundamentally directed towards Achilles' sense of honor (24.503-4):

> Honor then the gods (αἰδεῖο θεούς), Achilleus, and take pity upon me
> remembering your father, yet I am still more pitiful.'

In accepting Priam's supplication, Achilles honors an individual whose special status is underwritten by the gods (as that of all suppliants is),[38] but he also (on Priam's encouragement: cf. 486-92) generalizes from the duty of respect that sons owe their fathers: Priam's words unleash 'a passion of grieving for his own father' (24.507-8); the two weep, Priam in memory of Hector, Achilles in memory of his own father and Patroclus (24.509-12). Because Achilles would hate to see his own father suffer so, denied the privilege even of honoring his son with a decent burial, he will not so dishonor Priam. We see here just how far notions of mutual respect can go in support of universalizable moral values. By behaving in this way, Achilles achieves the *kydos* that Zeus promises at 24.110. And if this episode does bring Achilles *kydos,* it also underlines the fact that everything that is of value in human life exists against the background of mortality. Priam has exhorted Achilles to use the example of his own father as a means of understanding Priam's situation. Achilles does so, but then uses both Peleus and Priam as examples of a universal human truth, that all mortals suffer – some without respite, others in a pattern by which good fortune alternates with bad; only the immortal gods are free of care (24.522-51). At every stage of his career in the *Iliad*, Achilles' conduct reflects ideals and practices of honor; but the ways in which he does so reveal the complexity and inclusivity of that notion in the poem's ethical and sociological structure.

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[38] Cf. Cairns 1993, 113-19.

The complexities of the relations between the glory that the warrior seeks and his wider social obligations also emerge in the case of Hector. The celebrated scene in *Iliad* 6 in which Hector encounters his wife, Andromache, on the battlements of Troy is framed by a concentration on the superiority of the besieging Achaeans and indeed on the inevitability of Troy's eventual fall: Hector returns to the city on the advice of his brother, the seer, Helenus, because the Trojans are hard pressed (6.73-118). Once there, he carries out Helenus' instruction by exhorting the Trojan women to make an offering to Athena as protector of the city (*erysipolis*, 6.305) in the hope that she will pity the women and children of Troy and stay the onslaught of Diomedes (6. 86-98, 269-78). The offering is duly made, but Athena rejects the women's prayers (6.297-311). Focus has by now shifted from the battlefield to the city of Troy, and especially to its women and children (6.94-5, 275-6, 309-10). It is in this context that Hector meets Andromache, carrying their infant son – whom the Trojans named Astyanax, lord of the city, 'since Hector alone saved Ilion' (402-3). Andromache fears that Hector's fighting spirit will soon leave her a widow and their son an orphan, and appeals to Hector's sense of pity (407-11, 431-2), pleading with him to take up a defensive position within the city's walls (431-9). Hector replies (441-6):

> 'All these things are in my mind also, lady; yet I would feel deep
>   shame (*aidôs*)
> before the Trojans, and the Trojan women with trailing garments,
> if like a coward I were to shrink aside from the fighting;
> and the spirit will not let me, since I have learned to be valiant
> and to fight always among the foremost ranks of the Trojans,
> winning for my own self great glory (*kleos*), and for my father.'

Hector's sense of shame involves both a fantasy audience and a personal conviction (his 'spirit', *thymos*),[39] and it focuses squarely on the long-term fame (*kleos*) that is the warrior's goal.

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[39] On which see Jahn 1987, Pelliccia 1995, 2011.

For Hector, as for Achilles, the inevitability of death informs his attitude towards honor and fame. In Hector's case, however, the position is complicated by his concern for his dependants (6.447-65):

> 'For I know this thing well in my heart, and my mind knows it:
> there will come a day when sacred Ilion shall perish,
> and Priam, and the people of Priam of the strong ash spear.
> But it is not so much the pain to come of the Trojans
> that troubles me, not even of Priam the king nor Hekabe,
> not the thought of my brothers who in their numbers and valour
> shall drop in the dust under the hands of men who hate them,
> as troubles me the thought of you, when some bronze-armoured
> Achaian leads you off, taking away your day of liberty,
> in tears; and in Argos you must work at the loom of another,
> and carry water from the spring Messeis or Hypereia,
> all unwilling, but strong will be the necessity upon you;
> and some day seeing you shedding tears a man will say of you:
> "This is the wife of Hektor, who was ever the bravest fighter
> of the Trojans, breakers of horses, in the days when they fought
> about Ilion."
> So will one speak of you; and for you it will be yet a fresh grief,
> to be widowed of such a man who could fight off the day of your
> slavery.
> But may I be dead and the piled earth hide me under before I
> hear you crying and know by this that they drag you captive.'

Again, Hector imagines what people will say; and again, the fantasy audience is a project of his sense of shame – his wish to be dead and veiled (*kalyptein*) by the earth rather than hear of his wife's captivity is a classic shame reaction.[40] Hector is very clearly deeply concerned about his wife (and, it soon becomes apparent, also about their son,

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[40] Cf. Agamemnon's response to imagined reproaches for his failure to protect his brother, Menelaus, at *Il.* 4.169-82: such failure would be a cause of disgrace (would make him *elenchistos*, 171) and he wishes that the earth should open up and swallow him should it ever come to that (182). In Hector's case at 6.464-5, the use of the verb *kalyptein* effects an implicit link between death, grief, and shame, all of which are expressed by covering the head or face; see Cairns 2016.

466-84), but he does put his sense of himself as a warrior first.[41] But this is not a matter of his (at this stage) putting the pursuit of honor and fame before all else, but of pursuing the honor of martial valor and success in preference to the honor of being a successful protector of his dependants. Hector knows he will fail in the latter respect, and it troubles him; that failure substantially complicates his commitment to the pursuit of *kleos* in battle, even if he regards that as both the preferable and the only possible course of action.

Hector refers to the sense of shame that motivates him again in *Iliad* 22. Here, however, he is forced to confront the fact that his desire for military glory has led to a failure to protect his people; he had been advised to retreat, and, as in Book 6, had rejected the prudent course in favor of the prospect of glory (18.249-313, especially *kydos*, 294). But Hector does not just regret his failure to prevail in battle, nor has he merely realized that the pursuit of honor can be misguided. The shame that Hector feels focuses not (as in Book 6) on the imputation of cowardice, but on the duties of leadership and care that he owes his people (22.99-110):

> 'Ah me! If I go now inside the wall and the gateway,
> Poulydamas will be first to put a reproach upon me,
> since he tried to make me lead the Trojans inside the city
> on that accursed night when brilliant Achilleus rose up,
> and I would not obey him, but that would have been far better.
> Now, since by my own recklessness I have ruined my people,
> I feel shame before the Trojans and the Trojan women with trailing
> robes, that someone who is less of a man than I will say of me:
> "Hektor believed in his own strength and ruined his people."
> Thus they will speak; and as for me, it would be much better
> at that time, to go against Achilleus, and slay him, and come back,
> or else be killed by him in glory in front of the city.'

As in the first passage, it is clear that Hector cares deeply about what people will say; but these reproaches of the fantasy audience are hypothetical, and the pejorative construction they place on Hector's actions is his own ('since by my own recklessness I have ruined my people, I feel shame . . .' 104-5). His projection of the fantasy audience is an aspect of the way that he now views his own conduct – he knows he has failed, by his own standards. And so the only life worth living is the short one in which he faces Achilles and tries to redeem some of his lost honor by a noble death (22.129-30, 304-5). In Book 6, Hector's *aidôs* focused on the notion that retreat itself is a failure, and led him to reject Andromache's advice to withdraw within the city; but in Book 22, it focuses on a failure to retreat when to follow Polydamas' advice to do so would have saved the lives of many of his comrades. It is shame of the sort he experiences in Book 6 that propels him into the shameful situation he finds himself in in Book 22.[42] Hector's sense of honor, like that of Achilles, is part of his very being, central to his view of who he is. But also, as in Achilles' case, the self-assertive, individualist pursuit of honor and glory in battle is brought into explicit confrontation with wider aspects of a more inclusive concept that also encompasses the hero's duties to others.

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[41] This is a self-image to which the paternal model is central: Hector wins glory for himself *and his father* (446); just so, his (doomed) wish for his son's future is that one day people will say that he is a better warrior than his father, when he brings home the bloody spoils of battle and delights his mother's heart (479-81). Again, it is typical of Hector to construct imagined futures in terms of what people will say.

Conclusion

We have been concentrating on ideals of kingship and on a few of the ways in which they are more deeply and pervasively embedded in the poems (especially the *Iliad*) than is often supposed. Of course, these are only ideals; and ideals are not always easy to implement. Society's ability to restrain the powerful is limited, and defense of one's rights in the face of others' encroachment frequently depends on the victim's recourse to physical force or to powerful connections. Resolution of disputes by third parties depends on the status and attitudes of the disputants, the importance of what is at stake, and the authority of the arbitrator. Odysseus can roundly admonish Agamemnon for his injustice once the quarrel has been resolved (as we saw at 19.181-3, quoted above), but in Book 1 he says nothing, and Nestor is, of necessity, more circumspect. Achilles poses as the defender of the army against the arbitrary exploitation of a 'people-devouring' king (1.231); and he is indeed defending a Homeric ideal that leadership should be exercised in the interests of all rather than solely in those of the leader.[43] He is therefore disappointed when the assembly keeps its counsel rather than taking his side, to the extent that he implicates the entire force in his retaliation (1.231-2, 240-3, 298-9), even to the point of representing them as Agamemnon's accomplices (299), and it is only when the effects of that retaliation begin to bite that moves are made to appease him. Achilles himself can intervene in Book 23 to remind others that quarrelling is unseemly (493-4), but his authority as master of ceremonies is greater in that context than that of Nestor in his own quarrel with Agamemnon. Similarly, Telemachus' failure to enlist the Ithacan assembly in condemnation of the suitors (*Od.* 2.6-257) means that the only effective way to restore Odysseus' honor and position is violence (albeit with divine assistance). Homeric moral ideology and social institutions work as they should when all act as is expected of them; but no society is perfect, and when rules are broken, the response very much depends on the circumstances and on the character, status, and connections of the individuals concerned.

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[42] The ambivalence of *aidôs* is a phenomenon that the poems mention more than once (*Il.* 24.45, *Od.* 17.307; cf. 3.14). But on the whole, it is regarded as right to care about what people say; to be the kind of person who does not do so is to be shameless, and therefore contemptible, like Paris, whose wife wishes that he were a better man, who cared about the indignation (*nemesis*) and shameful reproaches (*aischea*) of others (*Il.* 6.350-1), or like the suitors, whose shamelessness is their chief characteristic (*Od.* 1.254, 13.376, 20.29, 386, 23.37) and who showed no respect for anyone, whether good or bad (22.414-15, 23.65-6).

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[43] Cf. Hesiod, *Works and Days* 220-73 on exploitative, 'bribe-eating' kings.

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2

THE VALUES OF THE *BOOK OF SONGS* AND THE VIRTUES OF LEADERS

Yiqun ZHOU

It is impossible to present a comprehensive analysis of the "values"—all that is considered important and worthy of pursuing, preserving, and emulating—of the *Book of Songs* in such a short paper. In view of the key role that the *Songs* played in the education of the early Chinese socio-political elite, a productive approach to the topic is to focus on the conceptions of leadership in the anthology: what qualities a good leader should have, how he acts in various spheres of life, what the relationship between leaders and their people is supposed to be like, and what it means for any aspiring member of the ruling elite to strive for accomplishments and lasting fame. These questions will get us to the heart of a set of the most fundamental moral and political values that the *Songs*, as part of the classical curriculum, aimed at inculcating in the early Chinese elite.

The figure of King Wen (d. ca. 1046 BCE), the most revered ruler not only of Zhou but also in Chinese history, commands great importance in this discussion. He stands as the ultimate paragon in the definition of exemplary leadership in the *Songs*, and his image sets the parameters for the portrayal of other leaders in the anthology. The first section of the paper will be devoted to the depiction of King Wen in the Eulogies (*Song*) and Major Court Hymns (*Daya*). The second section examines the conceptions of exemplary leadership expressed in other contexts, through other figures, and in relation to the notion of "good fame," in the anthology. Next follows a section on the relationship between leaders and led, highlighting the voices of protest against the ruling class' lack of justice and compassion. The paper closes with a discussion of how, in the early commentarial traditions, the first poem of the Airs of the States (*Guofeng*) came to be read as either praise or blame for the moral influences of a king and his consorts' conjugal conduct, notwithstanding the "literal" meaning of the poem as a simple love song. These didactic interpretations remind us that an analysis of the values of the *Songs*, especially of the hermeneutically more open Airs, will necessarily be bound up with the values attached to them in the early commentaries, all of which treat the anthology as an essential part of a pedagogical program for the training of moral and political leaders.

King Wen as the *Exemplum*

King Wen in the Eulogies

Of all early Zhou kings, King Wen is the most frequently invoked in the Eulogies of Zhou (*Zhousong*). He appears nine times in this corpus of thirty-one sacrificial odes, in comparison to five times for his son King Wu (r. ca. 1045-1043 BCE), who actually founded the Zhou dynasty after leading a successful military expedition against the Shang, three times for King Wu's son, King Cheng (r. ca. 1042-1006 BCE), and once for King Cheng's son, King Kang (r. ca. 1005-978 BCE).[1] Although these short eulogies offer only highly abstract praises of their subjects, they leave no doubt about the uniquely elevated status accorded to King Wen in Zhou political ideology.

First, despite having died two years before King Wu's conquest of the Shang, King Wen is credited with having originated the Zhou's dynastic enterprise and provided the basis of its initial ideological legitimation and subsequent military success. As "Martial" (Mao 285 "Wu") puts it:

> King Wen, the truly cultured one,
> Was able to open up [a cause] behind him.
> Inheriting and receiving it,

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[1] King Wen: Mao 266, 267, 268, 270, 271, 272, 282, 285, 295. King Wu: Mao 271, 274, 282, 285, 294. King Cheng: Mao 271, 274, 277. King Kang: Mao 274. Besides these individual invocations, many references are made to collectives of Zhou ancestors as "former kings," "illustrious ancestors," "ancestors and ancestresses," and "ancients." Unless otherwise indicated, translations of the poems are from Waley 1996, with modifications where necessary.

> King Wu prevailed over the Yin (i.e., the Shang) and destroyed it,
> Thus fulfilling the cause.
>
> (My translation)

King Wu's military conquest is presented here not as the centerpiece or highpoint of the act of founding a glorious dynasty, but rather as the continuation and completion of what had already been begun by a king who was celebrated for being "truly cultured" (*yunwen* 允文).

Second, the power of King Wen's virtues extended far beyond the founding of the dynasty; they are said to have formed a model to be followed by later Zhou rulers. "King Wen's paradigm" (*Wenwang zhi dian* 文王之典), which appears twice in the Eulogies of Zhou, is described as "clear and splendid" and "efficacious to this day" in "Clear" (Mao 268 "Wei qing," my translation). In "We Bring" (Mao 272 "Wo jiang"), the sacrificer makes an emphatic statement, by piling up three verbs meaning "to emulate, to model upon, to pattern after" (*yi* 儀, *shi* 式, *xing* 刑), about his aspiration to follow the paradigm of King Wen, "*yi shi xing Wenwang zhi dian* 儀式刑文王之典." For all the reverence shown to the other early kings and the pre-dynastic ancestors of the Zhou in the Eulogies, none of them was as closely associated with the historical mission and destiny of the dynasty as King Wen was in the minds of those who performed or heard these august odes over the centuries, and none could rival him in being regarded as a moral exemplar whom all members of the political elite must strive to emulate.[2]

King Wen in the Major Court Hymns

Seven of the first ten poems in the Major Court Hymns (Mao 235-44) mention King Wen. In these poems, King Wen is explicitly said to be the original recipient of the Mandate of Heaven that legitimated the Zhou's rebellion against the powerful Shang (Mao 235, 236, 244), and King Wu's military achievements are celebrated for having fulfilled his father's cause and brought about the actual transfer of the Mandate from the Shang to the Zhou (Mao 236, 244). This same understanding of what earned the Zhou the Mandate of Heaven informs the closing lines of "King Wen" (Mao 235 "Wenwang"):

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[2] On *wen* as a part of the "ideology of mimesis or cultural reproduction" in early Chinese historical writings, and King Wen as the object of imitation par excellence at the center of this mimetic system, see Schaberg 2001, 59, 74-5.

High Heaven does its business
Without sound, without smell.
Make King Wen your example,
In whom all the peoples put their trust.

Just as King Wen's cultured virtues, not military might, constituted the source of the Zhou's claim to rule in the beginning, the only way to hold on to their power—there is no other way, given the quiet but firm manner of the workings of Heaven—is to follow the example of King Wen.

The virtues that make King Wen such an exemplary figure are represented as exerting quiet but powerful influences on others. In the last stanza of "Spreading" (Mao 237 "Mian"), reference is made to King Wen's role in resolving a dispute between the rulers of Yu and Rui. According to the story preserved in Sima Qian's (ca. 145-ca. 87 BCE) *Records of the Grand Historian* (*Shiji* 4.117), the rulers of Yu and Rui, failing to come to terms over the conflict, decided to seek arbitration from King Wen because of the prestige he enjoyed among his peers. As soon as the two rulers entered the territory of Zhou, however, they were so struck by the courtesy and deference that people showed each other in this land that they became ashamed of themselves and agreed to put their dispute to rest without asking for King Wen's intervention. When word about this incident spread, the other rulers saw in it an indication that King Wen had been chosen to receive the Mandate of Heaven. Underlying the solution of the dispute between Yu and Rui is the following belief: a ruler who can exert such potent moral influence on his people, whose behavior in turn transforms two outside observers even without their coming into contact with King Wen himself, exemplifies the highest ideal of rulership and will be favored by Heaven as a recipient of its Mandate.

None of the details offered in Sima Qian's account appears in the last stanza of Mao 237, which merely asserts that "the dispute between Yu and Rui was settled, / King Wen touched their lives" (my translation), and concludes by pronouncing that groups of aides cluster around King Wen and assist him in various spheres crucial to the rise of Zhou. This ending of a poem that is otherwise mostly devoted to narrating the deeds of Tai Wang (King Wen's grandfather) points to the monumental significance, actual or symbolic, of the resolution of the Yu-Rui dispute in the historical memory of the Zhou people. In identifying this incident as the key turning point in Zhou's development into the great state that was to rule over All-Under-Heaven, "Spreading" pays a high tribute to King Wen and the transformational influence of his quiet moral virtues.

The exaltation of the quiet yet transformational nature of King Wen's virtues takes on a most striking form in "Sovereign Might" (Mao 241 "Huangyi"). Four of the eight stanzas of the poem are concerned with King Wen's punitive military expedition against the states of Chong and Mi, which committed the affront of invading two of Zhou's allied states. The military engagement itself is described with a stylistic thrift that justifies the terms "concealing the weapon" and "ellipsis of battle" used by C. H. Wang to characterize the representation of warfare in the *Book of Songs*.[3]

Alongside such suppression, "Sovereign Might" also attempts in other ways to show that neither King Wen's waging of the war nor its successful result is about military might. The entirety of Stanza 7 consists of Lord on High's instruction to King Wen, which begins:

> I commend your illustrious virtue.
> It is displayed with no sound and fury,
> And it does not depend on the use of whip and rod.
> Without awareness and contrivance,
> You obey the precepts of Lord on High.
> (My translation)

The description of King Wen's virtue as being manifest without sound and fury and without reliance on force is reminiscent of the statement in "King Wen" that Heaven conducts its affairs without sound or smell. To be presented in such similar language bespeaks the highest possible praise for King Wen, which is all the more striking against the context of the major battle in the king's career. As if to back up his commendation of King Wen and to distance the king from the use of force, Lord on High continues his instruction in this stanza by commanding the king to launch an attack on the two offending states, even going so far as to offer advice on the strategic and tactical aspects of the war plan.

To understand the "illustrious virtue" that works without sound and fury and wins such favor with Lord on High that he becomes the authorizer and counselor of King Wen's war, we must look at stanzas 3 and 4. In the background of these two stanzas is the famous story about the line of succession from Tai Wang to Wang Ji (King Wen's father) to King Wen. As the youngest son, Wang Ji was not in a position to inherit Tai Wang's title. However, Wang Ji's two elder brothers, Tai Bo and Yu Zhong, perceiving that their father had high hopes for Wang Ji's son, Chang, the future King Wen, decided to remove themselves from the line of succession by going into exile to a remote area so that the title would pass on to Wang Ji and eventually to Chang. With this moving story about unselfish brotherly love as background, stanzas 3 and 4 of "Sovereign Might" eulogize Wang Ji for being worthy of his brothers' sacrifice. Wang Ji is first and foremost praised for being loving to his brothers, a virtue that befits a leader and garners him the divine blessings necessary for the making of a king (維此王季，因心則友，則友其兄，則篤其慶). He is then commended for his "quiet virtue" in general (*mao qi de yin* 貊其德音), and his perspicacity and good judgment are said to have won him the people's obedience and attachment. Stanza 4 ends with King Wen's arrival on the scene. A ruler with flawless virtue, King Wen receives divine blessings and extends them to his descendants. With the ascension of King Wen, the meaning of the original act of brotherly love and self-sacrifice that involves his father and two uncles is fulfilled.

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[3] Wang 1988, 53-72.

The story of the line of succession that culminates in the rise of King Wen sheds important light on our understanding of King Wen's "illustrious virtue" in "Sovereign Might" and elsewhere in the Eulogies and Major Court Hymns. First, despite the undoubted eminence enjoyed by King Wen in the Eulogies and the Major Court Hymns, "Sovereign Might" shows that he is celebrated less as an individual who happens to be equipped with certain exceptional personal virtues, than as a particularly distinguished member of a group of ancestors who cultivate and pass down those virtues through the generations. As is aptly put in the Mao prefaces to the poem under discussion, "The House of Zhou cultivated virtue in every generation, but none surpassed King Wen [in this endeavor]." The story about the line of succession down to King Wen illustrates that the cultivation of virtue is a family tradition and that good moral influences begin within the family and are the best legacies that ancestors could hand down to descendants. In the perpetuation of this family tradition, King Wen was both the most worthy descendant and the most exemplary ancestor.

Second, the story about King Wen's father and two uncles also shows that family-centered virtues are the cornerstone of all virtues, including the political ones. The three brothers, all of whom became rulers (Wang Ji in Zhou, Tai Bo and Yu Zhong in Wu, the region where their self-exile took them), were above all remembered for their fraternal love. In the eulogy of Wang Ji in "Sovereign Might," it is explicitly stated that his rule was blessed because of his devotion to his brothers, and it is clearly suggested that the refounding of the line of succession, based upon the love among the three brothers, endowed the Zhou's future dynastic cause with a firm moral foundation and also set a high moral standard for all of their successors. The virtues that made King Wen the ultimate paragon of rulers, like those exemplified by his father and uncles, had a solid basis in the familial context and exerted their influence by radiating from the familial to the political sphere. This structure of virtues and the manner of their working are best illustrated in the praise that King Wen receives in the second stanza of "Great Dignity" (Mao 240 "Si zhai"):

> He was obedient to the ancestors,
> Never incurring the [ancestral] spirits' discontent,
> Never incurring the [ancestral] spirits' anger.
> He was a model to his wife,
> He was a model to his brothers,
> By this way he ruled the family and the state.[4]

This passage offers a pithy summary of King Wen's way of being king: by pleasing the ancestors with his obedience and piety, and by providing moral guidance for his wife and brothers, he successfully conducted himself not only as the head of the family but also as the head of the state. Here we see the embryo of the idea later to be developed in theoretical form in the "Great Learning" ("Daxue") chapter of the *Book of Rites* (*Liji*), the idea that self-cultivation, management of the family, governing of the country, and ordering of the world constitute a series of concentric circles in which the family figures as a microcosm of the state and the world, and good family order serves as the basis and *sine qua non* of good political order.[5]

King Wen's life provides a glowing testimony to this conviction about the homology of family and state, and the functioning of this homology explains why the "illustrious virtues" of this most revered ruler are celebrated for being "without sound and fury" and for exerting transformational influences quietly and effortlessly. In the conduct of family affairs, there is not much room for sensation and excitement, and providing a role model for others is the most effective way of teaching and managing. A good king rules his country in the same way he governs his family, and the impact of his silent example is a measure of his success in both the political and the familial realms. The juxtaposition in "Sovereign Might" of the story about the refounded line of succession and King Wen's reception of divine sanction in the most important war in his life points up how familial virtue translates into political merit. The Lord on High's pre-war commendation of King Wen's gentle and quiet virtue offers a potent affirmation of a structure of values in which the political and the familial are homologous and work by the same principles.

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[4] 惠于宗公，神罔時怨，神罔時恫。刑于寡妻，至于兄弟，以御于家邦 (my translation).

[5] *Liji zhengyi*, 60a.

"A model to his wife"

The wives of the early Zhou kings are an integral part of the narratives of the Zhou people's rise to eminence in the Major Court Hymns. "Spreading" mentions that Zhou Jiang, wife of Tai Wang, accompanied her husband as he led his people on a journey of migration to the plains where the Zhou people settled and flourished. "Major Bright" (Mao 236 "Daming") devotes three stanzas to Tai Ren (Wang Ji's wife) and Tai Si (King Wen's wife). Stanza 2 is about Tai Ren's marriage to Wang Ji. She was her husband's partner in the practice of virtue, and she subsequently gave birth to King Wen. Stanza 5 describes the splendid wedding of King Wen and Tai Si. In Stanza 6, Tai Si, who joined King Wen in practicing virtue, gave birth to King Wu. The most impressive presentation of the three early queens is found in "Great Dignity," which opens with a stanza on the three queens:

> Dignified was Tai Ren,
> The mother of King Wen.
> She pleased Zhou Jiang,
> The consort of the royal house.
> Tai Si carried on their fair name,
> Bearing a multitude of sons.
>
> (My translation)

This passage parades three generations of Zhou queens at the beginning of a poem that contains what may be considered the programmatic statement on King Wen's virtues. This placement, which foregrounds the wives' crucial role in the rise of Zhou, is in keeping with what the poem will go on to pronounce, namely, that King Wen's virtue is rooted in the familial realm and his good rule in the state is an extension of his success in the domestic domain (discussed above). The presentation of the three queens in the opening stanza indicates that King Wen's ancestors had already been following the same pattern in their public and domestic conduct, and that the wives' fair reputation testified to the good influences their husbands exerted in the familial sphere. "Major Bright," "Spreading," and "Great Dignity" praise the three queens not only for being their husbands' loyal supporters and partners in virtuous practices, but also for creating good order on the distaff side, underscored by filial piety. The latter point is shown in "Great Dignity," where Tai Ren is said to have succeeded in winning the pleasure of Zhou Jiang, and Tai Si, in turn, is said to have perpetuated the fair name of her mother-in-law and grandmother-in-law. The queens were able to do so because their husbands set good examples of filial piety for them to emulate. As in other respects, King Wen was the most distinguished exemplar of all in the guidance he provided for his wife, and praise of Tai Si fundamentally reflected on *his* moral status.

The King and his people: father and children

"Magic Tower" (Mao 242 "Lingtai") sings of a king's joyful visit to a pleasure park, a project that has been completed with amazing speed thanks to the people's eagerness to be at his service—in the same way loving children vie to serve their father (庶民子來). Starting with Mencius (ca. 372-289 BCE), all major commentators take the "king" referred to in the poem to be King Wen, and the poem is habitually invoked as a moving testament to the power of paternalistic political ideology.[6] The comparison of the ties between King Wen and his people to the father-children bond, blessed with love and joy, recalls the family-state homology in "Great Dignity." There, as here, the exemplary king and the good father are one and the same person; he rules the state and the family with the same approach and with the same result. In judging the validity of Mencius' reading of "Magic Tower," it does not matter so much that the "king" in this poem may not actually refer to King Wen as that King Wen's image as the ideal king-and-father made it compelling and persuasive to identify him with the beloved, unnamed king of the poem.

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[6] *Mengzi zhushu*, 1A.2; *Maoshi zhengyi*, 16.5a; *Shi jizhuan*, 240-1.

Exemplars and "Good Fame"

King Wen is merely the most revered of all paragons. The entire governing elite, who are exhorted to look upon King Wen as the ultimate exemplar, are themselves expected to behave as models, for others in the same class, for the common people, and for everyone in the world, with no class differentiation.

In "The Deer Cry" (Mao 161 "Luming"), the host of a banquet praises his guest of honor for "demonstrating to the people that he is not frivolous" and thus constituting "a pattern and model to all gentlemen." This is an instance of double exemplification: a member of the nobility provides a model for his peers by consciously endeavoring to be a model of behavior for the commoners.

A case of someone who serves as a universal paragon with no class differentiation is found in "The Sixth Month" (Mao 177 "Liuyue"). This poem narrates the successful military expedition that Yin Jifu leads against the Xianyun and the banquet that he holds to celebrate the victory. The sparse description of the campaign itself fits into the pattern of "ellipsis of battle" and bears no further analysis. In the penultimate stanza, just before the scene is switched from the war to the victory feast, Jifu is praised thus: "mighty in peace and war, / a pattern to all the peoples." In what sense Jifu is a universal exemplar is clarified in the last stanza. After mentioning that Jifu's friends are invited to the banquet, where they feast on various delicacies, the poem closes with the observation: "And who was with him? Zhang Zhong, who was filial and loving to his brothers." The eminence given to Zhang Zhong at the victory banquet elucidates the relationship between the "cultured" (*wen*) and "martial" (*wu*) aspects of Jifu's exemplary character. Jifu is worthy of the title "a pattern to all the peoples" insofar as he is above all a champion of filial piety and fraternal love, and his military prowess is underpinned and framed by his cultured values.

Other poems focus on either peer elite or the common folk as the target audience for the aristocrats' exemplary behavior. In "Waves of

Pan" (Mao 299 "Panshui"), the Duke of Lu is commended for supplying a model for the people by his reverent, scrupulous, dignified conduct. "Horn Bow" (Mao 223 "Jiaogong"), a poem that exhorts kinship solidarity, contains the following advice to the audience:

> If you are distant,
> The common people will be so too;
> But if you set a good example,
> The common people will follow it.

In "The People of Our Race" (Mao 260 "Zhengmin"), the king, conferring upon Zhong Shanfu the mission to fortify the eastern land, commands him to "be a pattern to all the officers of Court, /continue the work of your ancestors, / protect the royal person." In the preceding stanza, Zhong Shanfu is eulogized as follows:

> The virtues of Zhong Shanfu,
> Are a pattern of mildness and blessedness.
> Good is his every attitude and air,
> So cautious, so composed!
> Following none but ancient teachings,
> Striving only for dignity and good deportment,
> Obedient to the Son of Heaven,
> Whose glorious commands he spreads abroad.

Expressions meaning "model" and "pattern" (*ze*, *shi* 則, 式) are used three times in connection with Zhong Shanfu in this poem. He himself exemplifies mildness, prudence, and dignity (柔嘉為則, 令儀令色, 小心翼翼);[7] he models himself on ancient teachings (古訓是式); he is urged by the king to act as a paragon for all the high officials in carrying on the good deeds of his ancestors (式是百辟, 纘戎祖考). The emulation of past good practices, be it of biological ancestors or of a generalized group of "ancients," produces a model worthy of imitation by his contemporaries and presumably also by future generations.

The king's charge to Zhong Shanfu in "The Race of Our People" is reminiscent of two passages in "The Jiang and the Han" (Mao 262

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[7] The expression *xoao xin yi yi* 小心翼翼 (which Waley renders as "so cautious, so composed") also appears in the portrayal of King Wen in "Major Bright": 維此文王，小心翼翼.

"Jiang Han"), where the king bestows gifts on the victorious commander Shao Hu and exhorts him to serve the dynasty in the same way that his ancestor, the first Lord Shao, had served King Wen and King Wu. As a matter of fact, such reminiscences in *rhetoric* also find numerous parallels in the bronze inscriptions that purport to be historical records of ritual and administrative practices involving kings and their ministers. For our purposes, it is less compelling to read the two poems for information about any exchanges that actually occurred between *specific* ministers and their sovereign (Zhong Shanfu, Shao Hu, King Xuan) than to deduce from them the key role that ancestral piety played in shaping the very idea of emulation.[8] To be an exemplar to one's contemporaries and posterity presupposes learning from the examples of one's ancestors and other ancients, who had found their own models by looking backward to those coming before them. In this ideology, individuals assert their striving for excellence only by presenting it as part of a collective and continuous endeavor, and what they achieve is recognized and praised insofar as it successfully perpetuates the legacy of their predecessors. It is by participating in this vertical continuum that one achieves renown and leaves a mark in history.

"The Jiang and the Han" sees one of the three occurrences of the expression "good fame" (*ling wen* 令聞) in the *Songs*. The first time is in the second stanza of "King Wen," "Diligent was King Wen; / his good fame does not cease." Due to the conscientiousness and dedication with which he conducted himself as a ruler, King Wen won lasting "good fame," the celebration of which forms the predominant subject of the first decade of the Major Court Hymns. In "The Jiang and the Han," after expressing gratitude and good wishes for his sovereign, Shao Hu closes with the following praise for King Xuan, "The industrious Son of Heaven, his good fame does not cease. / Displaying his cultured virtue, / He harmonizes all the vassal states" (my translation). In praising King Xuan's "cultured virtue" after a military campaign, Shao Hu is here expressing his belief that, fundamentally, the king's civilian virtues, more than the power of his army, held the key to the military victory. Moreover, as suggested by the verbal echoes with "King Wen," Shao Hu may even be deftly exhorting the king to devote himself to the perfection of his cultured virtues and not to be drawn to the pursuit of military successes.[9] Whether he is stating a belief or subtly offering advice (or both), Shao Hu's speech compels his audience to recall the example of King Wen and to think about what "good fame" means and how it can be achieved.

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[8] For this point, I draw on Martin Kern's discussion of these two poems in his contribution to the present volume.

The next and last time we encounter the phrase "good fame" is in "A Bend in the Hillside" (Mao 252 "Quan e"). The central figure of this poem is a "happy and serene gentleman" (豈弟君子), who may be a Zhou king of unspecified dates. The fifth and sixth stanzas praise his exemplary role thus:

> He has help, he has assistance.
> Those with filial piety and inner power
> Guide him and assist him.
> The happy and serene gentleman:
> He is a model to all four quarters.
>
> Mild, courteous, and dignified,
> He is like a *gui* jade, like a *zhang* jade,
> With good fame and good repute.
> The happy and serene gentleman:
> He sets the norms for all four quarters.
> (My translation)

Serenity, modesty, filial piety, and purity (as suggested by the comparison to sacrificial jades): the qualities commended in these two stanzas, which earn the king "good fame and good repute" (*ling wen ling wang* 令聞令望) and make him a paragon for all of his subjects, are completely in line with the "cultured virtues" that define King Wen as the iconic figure in the Eulogies and the Major Court Hymns. These same fine qualities are also displayed or advocated in the other poems discussed in this section. Everlasting renown belongs to those who piously pattern themselves on their forebears and, in so doing, establish themselves as paragons for their contemporaries and later generations.

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[9] *Shi jizhuan*, 280.

Leaders and Led: Praise and Blame

"Nutgrass Grows on the Southern Hills" (Mao 172 "Nanshan youtai") and "At the Wayside Pool" (Mao 251 "Jiongzhuo") are often quoted as the *loci classici* of the paternalistic political ideology in early China. "At the Wayside Pool," the more frequently cited of the two, reads:

Drawing far off at that wayside pool,
Ladling there and pouring out here:
With it the rice can be steamed.
The happy and serene lord,
The father and mother of his people.

Drawing far off at the wayside pool,
Ladling there and pouring out here:
With it the earthen bowls can be rinsed.
The happy and serene lord,
The refuge of his people.

Drawing far off at that wayside pool,
Ladling there and pouring out here:
With it the lacquer bowls can be rinsed.
The happy and serene lord,
The peace of his people.

In this poem, the ideal ruler is praised as the father and mother of the people (*min zhi fu mu* 民之父母), and in that capacity, as the provider of refuge and peace for them (民之攸歸, 民之攸塈). The act described in the first three verses of each stanza, namely, drawing water from afar and distributing it to people for various essential daily uses, evokes the ruler's endeavor to care for the well-being of his subjects and epitomizes his indispensable role as their leader, benefactor, and nourisher, a role that is compared to that of a parent (father and mother combined). It is only under such a ruler that the people will remain devoted and contented subjects, which is the *sine qua non* for the forging of a good and stable polity. Likewise, in "Nutgrass Grows on the Southern Hills," a ruler who is likened to "the father and mother of the people" (*min zhi fu mu* 民之父母) is praised as "the groundwork" and the "light" of "land and home" (邦家之基, 邦家之光). In both poems, the family supplies the model for statecraft, and what secures the political bond between the ruler and the ruled is understood in terms of the same mechanism underlying the strong natural tie between parents and children: care and protection from one end, and devotion and obedience from the other.

"Magic Tower," in its traditional reading as a testimony to the people's outpouring of affection and support for King Wen in the construction of a park in his honor (discussed above), may serve as an excellent illustration of the paternalistic ideology explicitly expressed in the two poems under discussion. Elsewhere in the anthology, "Sweet Pear-Tree" (Mao 16 "Gantang") has also been generally interpreted along similar lines:

Tall and lush is this sweet pear-tree;
Do not lop it or knock it,
For the Lord of Shao took shelter under it.

Tall and lush is this sweet pear-tree;
Do not lop or harm it,
For the Lord of Shao rested under it.

Tall and lush is this sweet pear-tree;
Do not lop it or uproot it,
For the Lord of Shao reposed beneath it.

Whether the Lord of Shao in the poem refers to the illustrious minister who lived in the eleventh century BCE or to his eighth-century BCE descendant, the gist of the poem seems clear enough. The tender feelings repeatedly expressed about the sweet pear-tree, under which a good and beloved high official once took shelter, convey the gratitude and affection of the people for whom he cared and labored. As in "Magic Tower," the sentiments registered in this poem derive from the ideal relationship between rulers and commoners that is characterized by reciprocity and rooted in the fulfillment of each party's proper social roles.

More often, however, the *Songs* give voice to the plight and grievances of people who suffer because of their rulers' and superiors' lack of justice and compassion. Whereas the perfect lord in "At the Wayside Pool" is commended for furnishing a haven of peace and security for his people, the speakers in the poems that we will be looking at express yearnings to escape from exploitative rule and seek refuge elsewhere or to return to home life from endless duties imposed by the government.

"Big Rat" (Mao 113 "Shuoshu") demonstrates the intense feelings of alienation that can be unleashed among the people when they are governed by a harsh and greedy ruler, who in the poem is likened to a "big rat":

> Big rat, big rat,
> Do not gobble our millet!
> Three years we have slaved for you,
> Yet you take no notice of us.
> At last we are going to leave you
> And go to that happy land;
> Happy land, happy land,
> Where we shall have our place.
>
> Big rat, big rat,
> Do not gobble our corn!
> Three years we have slaved for you,
> Yet you give us no credit.
> At last we are going to leave you
> And go to that happy kingdom;
> Happy kingdom, happy kingdom,
> Where we shall get our due.
>
> Big rat, big rat,
> Do not eat our rice-shoots!
> Three years we have slaved for you.
> Yet you did nothing to reward us.
> At last we are going to leave you
> And go to those happy borders;
> Happy borders, happy borders
> Where no sad songs are sung.

The exemplary ruler in "At the Wayside Pool" works hard for his people's welfare, and in response they cling to him as if he were their father and mother. In contrast, the ruler in the present poem preys upon his people and shows no consideration for their livelihood in demanding his dues. As a result, they look upon him as if he were a voracious rat, so abominable and unbearable that they cannot but think of fleeing in search of "a happy land," "a happy kingdom," and "happy borders." In this dream place, "where no sad songs are sung," the inhabitants will no longer be venting their misery and resentment as they do in the present poem; instead, presumably, if they are to sing of their lord and his influence on their lives, they will be making songs in the manner of the poems that pay tribute to King Wen, Lord of Shao, and all rulers who exemplify the paternalistic political ideology.

A good number of poems are about the toils and laments of soldiers and laborers who are constantly kept away from home because of wars and government projects. The first three stanzas of "Plucking Bracken" (Mao 167 "Caiwei") give a good flavor:

> We plucked the bracken, plucked the bracken
> While the young shoots were springing up.
> Oh, to go back, go back!
> The year is ending.
> We have no house, no home
> Because of the Xianyun.
> We cannot rest or bide
> Because of the Xianyun.
>
> We plucked the bracken, plucked the bracken
> While the shoots were soft.
> Oh, to go back, go back!
> Our hearts are sad,
> Our sad hearts burn,
> We are hungry and thirsty,
> But our campaign is not over,
> Nor is any of us sent home with news.
>
> We plucked the bracken, plucked the bracken;
> But the shoots were hard.
> Oh, to go back, go back!
> The year is running out.
> But the king's business never ends;
> We cannot rest or bide.
> Our sad hearts are very bitter;
> We went, but do not come.

Grievances against the "king's never-ending business" (*wang shi mi gu* 王事靡盬) are also explicitly expressed in several other poems to be discussed later. Even when they do not aim directly at the king, as in "Jagged Are the Rocks" (Mao 232 "Jianjian zhi shi") and "What Plant Is Not Faded" (Mao 234 "Hecao buhuang"), the poets convey the same sense of depression and disaffection unmistakably. "Jagged Are the Rocks" does it by suggesting a parallel between the soldiers' indefinite term of service and the endless stretch of hills and rivers they encounter during their march:

Jagged are the rocks.
Oh, how high!
These hills and rivers go on and on.
Oh, how toilsome!
But soldiers fighting in the east
Have no time to pause.

Jagged are the rocks.
Oh, how steep!
These hills and rivers go on and on.
It seems as though they would never end.
But soldiers fighting in the east
Have no time to halt.

Similarly, in "What Plant Is Not Faded," pathos is created by alluding to the bleak terrain through which the soldiers march and also by comparing these homeless men to roaming beasts:

What plant is not faded?
What day do we not march?
What man is not taken
To defend the four bounds?

What plant is not wilting?
What man is not taken from his wife?
Alas for us soldiers,
Treated as though we were not fellow-men!

Are we buffaloes, are we tigers
That our home should be these desolate wilds?
Alas for us soldiers,
Neither by day nor night can we rest!

The fox bumps and drags
Through the tall, thick grass.
Inch by inch move our barrows
As we push them along the track.

In this poem, the soldiers' homeless status is presented as a state of long, forced separation from their wives. The hardships that prolonged military service poses to marriages are touchingly evoked in other poems such as "Eastern Hills" (Mao 156 "Dongshan"). There, a soldier who is about to conclude three years of campaigning thinks of his hard-working and lonely wife back at home and casts his thoughts back to his wedding day, to the time when the young bride departed from her father's house and embarked on a carriage ride to her new home. This memory is capped by the wondering question of the then-groom and now homecoming soldier, who is clearly anxious and apprehensive about the status of his marriage following his extended absence, "It was so good when the marriage was new. / What will it be like now that it is old?" (my translation)

Marriage is not the only family relationship that suffers due to the state's constant need for manpower in war and other large projects. Parents figure prominently in the soldiers' and laborers' laments in the *Songs*. "Tall Pear-Tree" (Mao 169 "Di du"), for example, assumes the voice of a soldier's wife who is consumed with yearning for her long-absent husband, but in the third stanza her thoughts are focused on the welfare of his parents:

> I climb that northern hill
> To pluck the boxthorn.
> The king's business never ends;
> What will become of our father and mother?
> Their wickered chariots drag painfully along,
> Their horses are tired out.
> The soldiers, perhaps, are not far away?

A woman wants her husband back from war, because he is important not only to her (the other stanzas of the poem describe how her heart is sad and sickened because of the separation) but also to his parents, who need their son's support both materially and emotionally. The frustration felt by the men who are unable to perform their filial obligations because they are drafted for state services receives a poignant expression in "The Bustard's Plumes" (Mao 121 "Baoyu"), the first stanza of which reads:

> *Suk, suk* go the bustard's plumes;
> It has settled on the oak clump.
> But the king's business never ends;
> I cannot plant my cooking-millet and wine-millet.
> Where can my father and mother look to for support?
> O blue Heaven so far away,
> When will this all be settled?

In the other two stanzas, the line "where can my father and mother look to for support?" is replaced by "What, then, are my father and mother to eat?" and "Then how shall my father and mother be fed?". The harrowing question at the end of the first stanza becomes "O blue Heaven so far away, / When will it all end?" and "O blue Heaven so far away, / When will things go back to their wonted ways?" in the other two stanzas. The repeated appeals to Heaven indicate the extent of the exasperation and helplessness experienced by the men who are prevented from caring for their parents because "the king's business never ends." In the presence of a government that is so unresponsive to its people's needs, they can only turn to the higher power of Heaven to let out their grievances and to express the desire that things be restored to the way they should be (*chang* 常, "wonted ways"). While short of being a wish to flee from the predatory "big rat" and leave for a happy land and happy kingdom, this is the same simple desire to live under a government that takes care of its people's fundamental needs, among which is the children's duty to provide for their parents.[10]

The lament can also be uttered from the perspective of parents themselves, as in "Climb the Wooded Hill" (Mao 110 "Zhihu"):

> I climb that wooded hill
> And look toward where my father is.
> My father is saying, "Alas, my son is on service;
> Day and night he knows no rest.
> Grant that he is being careful of himself,
> So that he may come back and not be left behind!"
>
> I climb that bare hill
> And look toward where my mother is.
> My mother is saying, "Alas, my young one is on service;
> Day and night he gets no sleep.
> Grant that he is being careful of himself,
> So that he may come back, and not be cast away."[11]

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[10] Similar sentiments are expressed in "Four Steeds" (Mao 162 "Simu"), "Northern Hill" (Mao 205 "Beishan"), and "Minister of War" (Mao 185 "Qifu"), even though the voices in the first two poems seem to be those of men who belong to the lower ranks of government and a cut above the commoner class.

[11] In the last stanza, the speaker imagines his elder brother speaking and wishing him safe return.

Without resorting to any vehement expression, this poem derives its great power from the speaker's imagination of his parents worrying for him and praying for his safe return. In normal circumstances, it should be the son who takes care of his parents and worries about their well-being, but with him being kept away on arduous service, the parents are not only deprived of support from him but also reduced to a state of constant agony over his survival. In its quiet way, this poem offers a criticism of the government's excessive demands on its people no less effectively than the songs that directly complain about how such demands are severely impeding the fulfillment of filial obligations. All these poems furnish a critical comment on the paternalistic ideology exemplified in "At the Wayside Pool." A trenchant condemnation of the ruling class's failure to live up to their figurative paternalistic role lies in the accusation that their lack of fairness and benevolence stands in the way of the promotion of filial piety in the natural family.

"Plucking Bracken," perhaps the best-known soldiers' lament in the *Songs*, ends with the following passage:

> Long ago, when we started,
> The willows spread their shade.
> Now that we turn back
> The snowflakes fly.
> The march before us is long,
> We are thirsty and hungry,
> Our hearts are stricken with sorrow,
> But no one listens to our plaint.

The maker of this lament would be vindicated, however, by its inclusion in the *Songs*. According to the tradition preserved in the first-century CE *History of the Han* (*Hanshu*), the *Songs* had its origins partially in the ancient rulers' endeavors to comprehend local customs, understand the accomplishments and failures of the government, and examine and rectify their own conduct.[12] Regarded as reliable indices to the sentiments of the people, the poems of praise and blame examined here would be frequently invoked as testimonies to the value of the paternalistic political ideology couched in the phrase "father and mother of the people."[13] All the aspiring members of the political elite were expected to find guidance for governance in the people's voices in the *Songs*, even though oftentimes this might just remain an expectation.

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[12] *Hanshu* 30.1708.

"Fishhawks" and Exemplary Conjugal Relations

The conception that good political rule originates in the ruler's inner quarters was embraced by all four major early commentarial traditions on the *Songs*, which applied it to their interpretations of the Airs of the States, and more specifically, of the first poem in the division, "Fishhawks" (Mao 1 "Guan ju"). The inordinate amount of exegetical attention garnered by "Fishhawks" has to do with the perceived connection between the inception of kingly virtue and the beginning of the canonical anthology. As stated in the Mao prefaces to "Fishhawks," the poems in the first two subdivisions of the Airs of the States ("Zhounan" and "Shaonan") "represent the path to a correct beginning and the foundation of kingly transformation." "Fishhawks," in particular, substantiates these claims. According to the Mao prefaces,

> 'Fishhawks' is about the virtue of the royal consort, the beginning of the Airs, by which to transform the world and rectify conjugal relationships. Therefore it was performed at the gatherings of villagers and performed on state occasions. 'Air' means 'suasion' and 'teaching.' Suasion is exerted to move its audience, and teaching is applied to transform its audience.[14]

Here is the text of "Fishhawks":

> *Guan guan* cry the fishhawks,
> On an islet in the river.
> The fair and good girl,
> A fit mate for the gentleman.
> Long and short the watercress,
> To left and right, pluck it.

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[13] For a brief genealogy of the phrase in early Chinese sources, beginning with the *Songs* and *Book of Documents*, through the *Mencius* and *Xunzi*, and ending with some Han dynasty texts, see Zhang 2009, chap. 6.

[14] *Maoshi zhengyi* 1.1a.

The fair and good girl,
One seeks her both when asleep and awake.
Seeking but failing to get her,
One yearns for her both when asleep and awake.
With long, endless thoughts,
One tosses and turns, on the side, on the back.

Long and short the watercress,
To left and right, gather it.
The fair and good girl,
One befriends her with zither and lute.
Long and short the watercress,
To left and right, pick it.
The fair and good girl,
One delights her with bells and drums.[15]

This poem has all the appearance of a love poem, its protagonists being an attractive but elusive young woman and her suitor pining away for her and trying all he can to please her. How can this poem be about "the virtue of the royal consort"? The Mao prefaces close with an answer to that question, "Taking delight in acquiring a good girl and uniting her with the gentleman; finding joy in advancing the worthy; not making licentious use of her [own] sensual beauty; being sad [that] the fair girl [has not yet been advanced], longing for the worthy and the talented, without any intention to harm the good—these are the meanings of 'Fishhawks.'" On this reading, the person to whom belong all the yearning, tossing and turning, and courting, is a virtuous royal consort who goes out of her way to obtain the fair and good girl as a companion for her husband. The consort's virtue consists in her complete lack of selfishness and her sole concern for the welfare of her husband and of the royal family. The girl's association with "the worthy and the talented" and "the good" shows that, beautiful as she is, physical charm is not her chief recommendation, and the motivation for the virtuous consort's eager courtship of the girl is to seek further help to ensure the smooth functioning of the royal household. The consort's virtuous action and the ideal family order that it aims to create will set a good example for all married couples in the world, and ultimately will testify to the leadership and influence of her husband, the king, and buttress his ability to rule and guide. Hence, the apparently extravagant claims in the Mao prefaces that "Fishhawks" can rectify conjugal relationships and transform the world, and that the "Zhounan" and "Shaonan," headed by "Fishhawks," "represent the path to a correct beginning and the foundation of kingly transformation."

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[15] My translation. In translating lines 4-8 in Stanza 2 and lines 4 and 8 in Stanza 3, I have deliberately refrained from clarifying the gender of the subject where the Chinese original is ambiguous. (Most translators, taking this to be a conventional love song, make "he" the subject of all actions described in these verses.) As will be seen, the gender ambiguity allows Mao to interpret this poem as being about a virtuous consort's desire to obtain a worthy companion for her husband rather than being about a man's yearning for the girl he loves. My rendering is awkward, but it helps to explain why the Mao reading would make sense.

The Mao reading of "Fishhawks" dates the poem to the times of Duke Zhou (son of King Wen, brother of King Wu) and Lord Shao and sees it as a testimony to the transformative influences that the virtuous early kings and queens exerted on their subjects. The readings of "Fishhawks" in the other three Han commentarial traditions all agree that the poem is about exemplary conjugal conduct, although they have rather different understandings of the poem's intended use.[16]

According to the Lu reading, "Fishhawks" was composed during the reign of King Kang, when a poet, being concerned with the excessive amount of time that the king was spending with his consort, made an indirect criticism of the king's misbehavior by singing of appropriate conjugal conduct. That is, instead of being a praise poem as the Mao reading would have it, "Fishhawks" is a blame poem. Instead of being about a virtuous consort's anxious wish to obtain yet another worthy helpmate for her husband, "Fishhawks," by showing how a gentleman manages to court his beloved girl properly, despite his strong attraction to her, conveys the hope that the misbehaving king and his consort would rectify their conduct accordingly.[17]

This radically different understanding of the purpose of "Fishhawks" nonetheless concurs with the Mao reading on two essential points. First, both Lu and Mao believe that "Fishhawks" depicts proper conjugal relations, and they both endow such a depiction with exemplary and transformative functions. Taking "Fishhawks" as a satire that is aimed at remonstrating with a wayward king still assumes that the poem has the potential to modify his behavior and bring it in line with the model it offers. Second, Lu shares Mao's conviction that good political rule begins with proper order in the royal inner chambers. Just as Mao believes that "Fishhawks" and other poems in the "Zhounan" and "Shaonan" mark the correct beginnings and lay the foundation for the transformational achievements of the early kings, Lu regards the composition of "Fishhawks" as the response of a poet who sees in King Kang's improper conjugal conduct the roots and incipient signs of political decline.

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[16] On the history of the Qi, Lu, and Han traditions in the Han dynasty and their relationships with the Mao tradition, see Hightower 1948; Zhao 2004. For a succinct account of the divergence between Mao and the other three traditions, with specific reference to their readings of "Fishhawks," see Kern 2010a, 35-7.

[17] The Han reading is along similar lines. See the collection of fragments in *Shi sanjia yi jishu*, 1: 4-5.

The same understanding about the exemplary effect of royal conjugal conduct on the people and about the direct linkage between such conduct and the achievement of a good socio-political order is also expressed in the following comment by Kuang Heng, a noted follower of the Qi tradition, in the first century BCE:

> In his discussion of the *Songs*, Confucius placed 'Fishhawks' at the head. What this says is that, the supreme ruler being the father and mother of the people, if his consorts' conduct is no match for heaven and earth, then he will not be able to serve the gods and spirits and to manage the myriad things properly. Therefore the *Songs* says, 'The fair and good girl, / a fit mate for the gentleman.' It means that she is able to achieve faithfulness and goodness, without ever changing her manner of conduct, without allowing the impact of emotions and desires to interfere with her appearance and demeanor, without allowing the thoughts entertained in relaxation and privacy to manifest in her movements, and that only then can she be a mate for the supreme ruler and preside in his ancestral temple. This is the starting point of principles and rules, and the beginning of kingly teachings.[18]

Underlying the early readings of "Fishhawks" is the belief in the fundamental importance of conjugal relations and wifely virtues to the political order and also of the ruler's exemplary role in domestic life.

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[18] *Shi sanjia yi jishu*, 1: 4. The reference to presiding in the ruler's ancestral temple is a gloss on the act of gathering the watercress, a plant believed to be used as an offering in ancestral sacrifices, mentioned in stanzas 2 and 3 of "Fishhawks."

This belief was best exemplified in the person of King Wen as portrayed in the Major Court Hymns, especially in "Great Dignity." The Mao prefaces, while elucidating the significance of placing "Fishhawks" at the beginning of the *Songs*, did not yet draw a link between this poem and King Wen, but that step would be taken later. In the seventh century CE, in the official exegesis on the Mao recension of the *Songs*, *The Correct Significance of Mao's Book of Songs* (*Maoshi zhengyi*), "Fishhawks" is explicitly said to be about the virtues of King Wen and his wife Tai Si. Once made, the association of King Wen and Tai Si with the "Zhounan" and "Shaonan" was to persist through the end of China's pre-modern era, until twentieth-century iconoclastic critics began to tear away what they saw as the distorting readings imposed upon the *Songs* and to unveil the "true meaning" of what they believed to be the love songs of simple folks.[19]

The modern iconoclastic reading reflects the radically altered interpretive frames that have been brought to bear on the *Songs* and other Confucian classics since the early twentieth century. However, it may be misguided to claim that the new reading is superior because it successfully uncovers the "true" or "original" meaning long concealed by the traditional readings.[20] What is meant by a canonical work like the *Songs* can be determined less by its literal surface than by the interpretive conventions shared by the communities within which it is received and transmitted. None of the early readings of "Fishhawks" known to us regards it as a love song in which a man expresses his strong feelings for a woman. Instead, they all emphasize the poem's moral significance and draw from it a lesson about the importance of order, self-control, and propriety in conjugal relations,[21] and most of them understand the poem's order of placement in the anthology in terms of the special weight it carries in conveying messages about the linkage between family and state, and about rulers' exemplary roles in domestic conduct. Given the *Songs*' crucial role in the moral edification of the early Chinese elite, these interpretations should by no means be dismissed in any attempt to probe the values embodied in the anthology.

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[19] See Chen Pan's 1928 essay, in which he seeks, by bringing in "a mindset that has not been inherited from before" (425), to demolish the traditional connection made between the "Zhounan," "Shaonan," and the moral influence of King Wen.

[20] As Martin Kern (2010b, 39) sees it, the modern wholesale rejection of the early didactic readings risks committing "a fallacy born out of ignorance and arrogance."

[21] This is also true of the references to "Fishhawks" in the excavated manuscripts of "Confucius' Discourses on the *Songs*" ("Kongzi shilun" 孔子詩論) and the "Five Modes of Conduct" ("Wuxing" 五行), which I cannot discuss here due to space constraint. See Kern 2010b, esp. 33-40. Kern (2010a, 37) points out that the readings in the excavated manuscripts, as well as in the

Conclusion

As a major repository of moral values in early Chinese society, the *Songs* instructed its audience—the socio-political elite and those aspiring to such status—on what was most worthy of pursuing in human lives, what was the best legacy to leave behind, and how to ensure success in these endeavors. An inquiry into the conceptions of leadership in the anthology and the commentarial traditions developing around it supplies a useful perspective for teasing out a system of values from a collection of over three hundred poems of diverse provenances, topics, and styles.

A good leader is first of all a reverent inheritor and imitator of his ancestors and other predecessors; he bases his practice of virtue in domestic relations and extends it to the public domain; he provides an example both for his peer elite and for the common people, the latter of whom he guides and protects as if they were his children; he strives for excellence with a view to perpetuating a heritage to which he is indebted; and he achieves exemplary status and lasting good reputation for such qualities as filial piety, fraternal love, modesty, prudence, and dignity. This is the profile of the ideal leader that emerges from our inquiry, best exemplified by King Wen, and corroborated both positively by the images of other paragons and negatively by the common folk's grievances against their rulers. The family, as a collection of social relations, a space for moral practices, and a microcosm for the polity, stands at the center of all the qualities and quests related to

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Xunzi and Liu An (179-122 BCE) do not treat "Fishhawks" and the Airs as political commentaries of a specific historical background and purpose, but rather as "general vehicles of moral edification" and therefore differ significantly from the historical-political approach of the Mao, Qi, Lu, and Han interpretations. Nonetheless, this difference does not contradict the point that I make here.

leadership, and the influence of good examples is regarded as the most powerful way to transform minds and change the world.

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3

VALUES COMPARED: HOMER AND THE *BOOK OF SONGS*

HUANG Yang and YAN Shaoxiang

It is no easy task to bring the values of the Homeric poems and of the *Book of Songs* (*Shijing*) into comparative light as both are complex texts that embody a wealth of values and are susceptible to multifaceted readings. The two sets of texts are also very different in structure and purpose. The fact that both sets have a complicated history of coming into being compounds the problem. The values revealed in ecah set are not only multiple, but also not necessarily internally consistent. This is just as one would expect in the case of the Homeric poems, with two distinct narratives of two rather different heroes in rather different circumstances,[1] and even more so in the case of the *Book of Songs,* a collection of 305 poems dealing with events or occasions on different social levels and in different social situations.

The most sensible approach in the limited space of an article is perhaps to identify one particular set of values that are most comparable and to discuss them thoroughly, precisely as our two authors have done. The values that concern ideals of rulership or leadership are an obvious starting point for a comparative perspective. Indeed, the virtue of the king is a crucial theme in the *Book of Songs,* as Zhou Yiqun has eloquently brought out by focusing on the central figure of King Wen as the *exemplar*. Proper leadership (or rulership) is also a key issue that is emphasized in both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. Moreover, from a historical point of view, the values of rulership illustrated in the two sets of texts represent one of the most important aspects of early thinking in the two societies, both of which stand at the beginning of profound political traditions. For this reason, both of our authors should be commended for having successfully shed light, in a comparative perspective, on a key set of values as expounded in the poems. Though we cannot hope to do full justice to their rich discussions, we would like to single out a few points on which to comment.

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[1] This is directly related to the composition of the epics and has generated a long history of debate. For the current view on this subject, see Foley 1997, 146-73; Schein 1997, 345-59; and Tracy 1997, 360-379.

Socio-political Structures

Before looking at the "ideology of kingship", as we may call it, in the two sets of texts, we should make clear that the societal structures reflected in the texts are not the same. In the Homeric poems, the "picture is notoriously vague" and is "best explained as involving the coalescence of dimly perceived or fantasized models, associated with earlier periods, with the realities of the contemporary politics", i.e. the world of the "emergent *polis*" (Cairns 389). In this world, society was dominated by an aristocratic class, the *basilêes*, "kings". But if we use the term "kingship", we must be clear that this was "kingship without monarchy". First, there was a plurality of kings: in the Homeric narratives, Agamemnon *and* Achilles, Odysseus *and* the suitors are all *basilêes*. Second, these kings did not wield absolute power; they could not rule by authority and charisma alone since formal institutions of public participation in decision-making, such as the council of the elders and the assembly of the people, began to be established and the nobles and even the common people began to represent a powerful check on the *basilêes*' authority.[2]

The *Book of Songs* largely reflects the society of the Zhou dynasty, which had conquered and replaced the preceding dominant kingdom, the Shang. The change of power came about in the reign of King Wu, son and heir to King Wen, but the latter was considered the founder of the Zhou dynasty, as he was believed to have won the Mandate of Heaven from the corrupt Shang ruling house because of his virtuous governance. The Zhou king sent his kinsmen to rule over different regions around the royal domain, which the king directly controlled, forming a feudal-like political system.[3] Hence, structurally the family and the state were interwoven closely and the state was the family extended. A strong ideology of ancestral worship, attested not only in the *Book of Songs* but also in other documents of the period, was the key to ensuring that kingship was preserved for the royal house. Later, the institution of monarchy was never to be doubted, let alone challenged, until modern times.[4]

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[2] For the position of the *basilêes*, see Finley 1979, 77ff.; for a reassessment, see Raaflaub 1997, esp. 633ff., 642ff.; Yan Shaoxiang 2006, 133-52.

[3] Wang Guowei emphasizes the difference between the systems of Shang

We may also add that the values illustrated in both the *Book of Songs* (with the exception of the *Guofeng*) and the Homeric poems largely reflect the ideas, ideals, and expectations of the elite classes. The Homeric poems predominantly describe a world of aristocrats, the *agathoi* or *basilêes*, just as the *Book of Songs* mostly talks about the deeds, feelings, and expectations of the rulers and the *junzi*, or gentlemen, which appear no fewer than 183 times. Clearly, at this stage, the values of society are largely formulated by and addressed to the elite classes.[5]

Good and Bad Rulership: Commonalities

In spite of the differences between the societal structures evoked in the Homeric epics and the *Book of Songs,* nevertheless, we observe some fundamental commonalities concerning the ideas of rulership. These ideas are expressed in both sets of poems through exempla, as the two papers by Cairns and Zhou have shown. In the *Book of Songs*, the positive ideas are above all embodied in the person of King Wen, who is established as the example of an ideal king and regarded by posterity as the archetypal ideal ruler. In the Homeric poems, the main examples

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and Zhou. The king of Shang was a leader of the equals but the king of Zhou was apparently the monarch. Wang Guowei 1959, 451-80.

[4] Zhao Boxiong points out that the city-states ruled by Zhou were rather different from those of the classical Greek world because they were dependent on the will of Zhou kings. The kings of Zhou exercised an absolute power over the city-states. See Zhao Boxiong 1990, 13-19; 93-157.

[5] It is true that some poems of the *Guofeng* could reflect the values of the commoners, and even blame the exploitation of the rulers. On the other hand, Sima Qian tells us that most of the poems were the works of the elites (*xiansheng* 賢聖). We also find that quite a few of them still praise the rulers and wars, which would mainly demonstrate the expectations of the elites. Cf. *Shiji* 130.3300; Gu Derong and Zhu Shunlong 2001, 402.

of good kingship are Nestor and Odysseus. In addition, there are also direct statements concerning good and bad rulership.[6]

The "ideals of leadership" that Cairns points out for the Homeric epics (as for Hesiod's didactic poems) include gentleness and kindness in dealing with others, the ability to settle disputes peacefully through justice and charisma, and sincere care for the well-being of the community, which is rewarded in return by the loyalty of the people (Cairns 382-7, 394-5). In short, an ideal ruler is supposed to bring peace and prosperity to the community (Cairns 385-7).

Quite a number of poems in the *Book of Songs* evoke the virtues of early Zhou kings, especially, but not exclusively, of King Wen. King Wen is illustrious for the "cultured virtues" with which he imbued his people and that helped him to resolve a dispute between two regional rulers, even without his personal presence (Zhou 412-15; 422-3). His succession to the throne is made possible through filial piety and unselfishness, and he himself continues this tradition and, in this way, serves as a model for members of his family, and beyond for regional rulers (Zhou 415-17). Good rulers, like him, distinguish themselves through reverence and scrupulousness, mildness and dignity but above all through "care for the well-being of their subjects", which is recompensed by the affection of the people (Zhou 424-5).

Much of this ideology of rulership is summed up, both in the *Book of Songs* and in the Homeric poems, in the equation of the good king with a father (or even to both of the parents). The *Book of Songs* conveys the strong idea that ruling a kingdom is like taking care of a family, and that the virtuous king who sets himself as a good example for his family naturally brings about good governance (see Zhou 417-18 with reference to the second stanza of Mao 240 "Si zhai"). In another courtly hymn, it says that people flocked to him "like his children" (Mao 242 "Lingtai"; Zhou 419-20). Similarly, in the *Odyssey*, the good king is often compared to a father. Odysseus is at least twice said to have ruled "kind[ly], like a father" (*Od.* 2.47, 234; Cairns 383). Nestor is portrayed as a good king in connection with his role as a good father and perhaps even because he is a father figure. It is, perhaps, no accident that those other kings who are portrayed as good kings are also emphatically presented as loving fathers. Such is the case for Priam and also Alcinous, king of the Phaeacians. And such is also the case for Hector: although he is not (yet) a king, he is portrayed as a great leader of the Trojan army and a loving father. Moreover, Hector sets himself as an example for his brothers to follow. In this respect, he is similar to King Wen.

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[6] Homer, *Od.* 2.229-41; 19.109-14. To these examples, we can add, as Cairns does in his paper (395-6), Glaucus and Sarpedon. They feel the need to be the leaders in the war and fight in the front (Homer, *Il.* 12.310-13).

In correspondence to these similarities between the positive examples of rulership in our two sets of texts, there are also certain commonalities between the negative counter-examples. In Homer, such counter-examples mainly include Agamemnon and the suitors. In the *Book of Songs*, it is the rulers who are blamed for causing the grievances and feelings of alienation of the people in quite a number of poems.

The common denominator of such leaders' failures is selfishness and the lack of concern for others. Thus, Agamemnon "disregards the assembly's universal view that he should accept Chryses' ransom" and instead treats the priest with disrespect and violence (Cairns 391). Similarly, in his dealings with Achilles, he goes back on the distribution of booty made in the name of the collective (Cairns 391). In both cases, "he puts him*self*, *self*ishly, before the communal norms and his obligations to others" (Cairns 391-2). The offence of the suitors, also *basilêes*, concerns the "ethic of reciprocity": they consume Odysseus' household without any intention to give back and thus are legitimately punished (Cairns 3[illegible]). The Homeric narratives show the destructive consequences that this kind of moral failure in its leading members has for the community and the price that has to be paid to overcome them.

In the poems of the *Book of Songs* that criticize the rulers' selfishness and lack of concern for others, it is mostly the people who suffer. Thus, in the "Big Rat" poem, the ruler preys upon his people and shows no consideration for their livelihood in demanding his dues (Zhou 426). A great many poems are about the toils and sufferings of soldiers and their families caused by "the never-ending business" of superiors who care only for their own affairs without any regard for the concerns of their subjects as whose "father and mother" they should act (Zhou 427-32).

Good and Bad Rulership: Differences

The commonalities we have observed are of a relatively general nature. Beside these one should not overlook the differences that exist as well.

The first of these differences concerns the concept of the ideal ruler. The different role of military leadership or prowess in the two sets of texts is perhaps the most striking one. Even though prowess does not remain unquestioned in the Homeric narratives, as Cairns demonstrates (Cairns 395-405), there is no doubt that it represents a decisive component of what distinguishes the exemplary leaders.[7] Agamemnon cannot equal Achilles in valor – which is one reason for the conflict that arises – but he is, nevertheless, a great warrior, too, who receives his own *aristeia* in Book 11. Similarly, for the two "ideal leaders", Odysseus and Nestor, prowess and martial achievements are one reason for the prestige they enjoy, even if for Nestor these things are long past – and therefore are constantly evoked by him in his speeches.

It is very different in the *Book of Songs*, which typically does not portray the prowess and valor of rulers in military actions. The fact that the merit of founding the Zhou empire, the All under Heaven (*tianxia* 天下), is ascribed to King Wen rather than to his son King Wu, the great conqueror of the Shang, is telling. As Zhou correctly notes (Zhou 412f.), even where King Wen does lead a punitive military expedition "the military engagement itself is described with a stylistic thrift that justifies the terms 'concealing the weapon' and 'ellipsis of battle' used by C. H. Wang to characterize the representation of warfare in the *Book of Songs*" (Zhou 413f.). The ideal ruler, King Wen, is always depicted as a great pacifist, forever conquering by means of his moral superiority rather than by the force of arms.[8]

Almost as compensation, another quality is central in the *Book of* Songs' ideology of the good ruler, one that does not play a comparable role in the Homeric epics. This is the quality of being a mediator between Heaven and the community. Prominent Homeric heroes are, in one way or another, connected with the divine sphere, but they are so almost exclusively on a personal level, i.e. as individuals. In contrast, King Wen and the other Zhou kings fulfill one of their main functions as mediators between the community and Heaven or the "Lord on

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[7] Among the many virtues of the heroes, the capacity to fight is always valued most in societies that are not very stable. Cf. Bryant, 1996, 27-9.

[8] Even King Wu could be described as a strong pacifist. He disbanded his army and deposited all the weapons after conquering Shang, suggesting that the violence was gone forever. The reason for his action could be found in the fact that he was now the supreme ruler and none should challenge him with force. See *Shiji* 4.129.

High", from whom they obtain their mandate, from whom they receive instructions, and with whom, as representatives of the community, they keep on good terms through obedience, sacrifice and prayer (Zhou 414-18).

Another difference between the Homeric epics and the *Book of Songs* concerns the relation of kingship and family. As we have seen in both corpora of texts, it is indicated that the ideal ruler in his relationship to the ruled is like a father to his children. Yet, the analogy between rulership and fatherhood is different in nature in the two cases. In the Homeric poems, the father is never much more than an image for the ideal ruler. Family and state are separate entities. Although the noble houses hold prominent positions in the society depicted, they are not tied to state institutions. Furthermore, the king's position is contested. His power is not absolute but subject to censure by other nobles and the community as a whole.[9] In the *Book of Songs* and the society it reflects, family and kingship are more tightly intertwined. We see that ancestral worship is of paramount importance to an ideal ruler, as exemplified again by King Wen, whose virtuous rule is manifested foremost in his piety to his ancestral spirits. The ideal king strives to follow the example of his ancestors and to set himself up as an example for his heirs to follow in order to keep the Mandate of Heaven with the ruling house (Zhou 417-18).

This brings us naturally to a further point. As Zhou convincingly demonstrates, even the paramount ideal ruler, King Wen, "is celebrated not so much as an individual who happens to be equipped with certain exceptional personal virtues, but more as a particularly distinguished member of a group of ancestors who cultivate and pass down those virtues through the generations" (Zhou 416, see also 419-20 for a generalizing formulation). To say it pointedly, the decisive unit on the level of human affairs is not the individual ruler but the series of rulers who follow each other as the members of one ruling family and who orientate their conduct towards the example of their ancestors as they themselves serve as examples for subsequent generations of heirs.[10]

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[9] Osborne 2004, 213 even thinks that authority in Homer is "always provisional in nature" because of "the delicate balance between conventional rules, individual authority and community participation".

[10] The prevalent principle in *Shijing* is apparently "The King is dead, long live the king!" The later kings generally would trace their kingship to King Wen, and sometimes would also point to Gong Liu as a founding father. More

The protagonists of the Homeric epics, to be sure, are members of families too, and are often called by their patronymic. Nevertheless, they strike us less as members of a family lineage than as the great individuals that they are. They may aspire to the glory of their forefathers but, in the end, they do so on their own account and for their own sake.[11]

For another difference, we can turn back to what we started with, the socio-political structures that come to the fore in the two sets of texts. As we pointed out, there is an opposition that can be briefly characterized as "kingship without monarchy" vs. "kingship with monarchy" or "flat hierarchy" vs. "steep hierarchy". These characterizations hint at the different relationships within which good leadership and the values whose realization characterizes it are supposed to prove themselves in our two corpora of texts. In both cases, there are two such relationships, that between ruler and the aristocracy and that between ruler and the people. The difference that can be observed is one of emphasis. In the Homeric epics, the conflicts in the centre of attention are those between the leader and the peers among whom he is the *primus* (Agamemnon and the leaders of other contingents, especially Achilles; Odysseus and the suitors; see Cairns 388-95), while the relationship between leader and people, e.g. the assemblies before Troy and in Ithaca, is only of secondary importance. In the *Book of Songs*, this seems to be the other way around. If we follow Zhou Yiqun, we see that the dealings of the Zhou kings with the regional rulers are, of course, important, but the dimension where the quality of rulership is decidedly tested is that of the relationship between the ruler and the people – just as it is to be expected in a truly monarchical as opposed to a fundamentally aristocratic system (Zhou 424-32).

Finally, reactions to bad rulers or leaders, as shown in the two sets of texts, are pointedly different, something that also reflects the differences in the political systems of the two societies, as we have already indicated. In the Homeric poems, criticism of unjust behavior by the

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poems, such as "Daming" ("Great Virtue"), "Wei Tian Zhi Ming" ("Obey the Heaven's Order"), and "Hao Tian You Cheng Ming" ("Heaven's Mandate"), emphasize that the family of King Wen and his descendants won the Mandate of Heaven and was entitled to rule.

[11] So Finley says that in Homeric society, the rule is that "the king is dead and the struggle for the throne is open". The king's rule becomes rule by might and therefore it is very personal. See Finley 1979, 83-4.

leaders is often direct and can be very harsh because it is mostly presented as criticism of equals by equals. Yet, even an ordinary member of society could come forward to mount a direct criticism of the leader, as Thersites does to Agamemnon.[12] In the *Book of Songs*, however, criticism of superiors is clearly differentiated. Whereas criticism against the ministers and officials is often direct and harsh, as in “Big Rat” quoted above, criticism of the king is always mild and indirect, done mainly by referring to the suffering of the people as, for example, in the “The First Month” (Mao 192) and the “The Tenth Month” (Mao 193). The harshest criticism of the king is that he is unresponsive to the people’s needs and indifferent to their suffering. Thus, the *Book of Songs* had established the tradition of *baobian*, or “praise and criticism”, which was to remain a key theme and main function of later historical writings and political literature.

Glory, Good fame, and the Community

Much of what we have discussed so far is reflected in a topical complex that is treated in independent sections in both papers: “Honor, glory, and the community in the *Iliad*” (Cairns 395-405) and “Exemplars and 'Good Fame'” (Zhou 420-4). The different length of the sections mirrors the different weight the topic has in the two text corpora. Concerning Homer, we are dealing with the ideological core of the *Iliad*, the complex relationship between the heroic ideal of fame and glory and the interests of the community, whereas in the *Book of Songs* we are dealing with a subsidiary theme. Nonetheless, it seems worthwhile to look into the matter in order to see if there are any points of similarity, as well as to investigate the reasons for the differences, if these should prevail.

It is Sarpedon, leader of the Lycians and son of Zeus, who offers the most straightforward statement of heroic ethics in the *Iliad* (12.310-28; Cairns 395-7). These ethics are connected both to the individual and to the community. On the one hand, prowess in the battlefield, especially among the leaders and members of the elite class, is required by the community, as war seems to be ubiquitous and the survival of the community very much depends on its ability to defend itself and to defeat the enemy. In return for their prowess, the community confers various privileges such as wealth, slaves, and, in particular, honor and glory on the heroes. Glory is the most precious of these rewards, for it is tantamount to survival after death, a way of outliving one's mortal life, constituting the only form of immortality accessible to mortal man. Since honor is the foreshadowing of glory, the heroes are extremely concerned about it. As the examples of Achilles and Hector show (Cairns loc. cit.), in defending it they even go so far as to damage the community or their own family.

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[12] Homer, *Il.* 9.31-49 (Diomedes’ criticism of Agamemnon); 2.216-42 (Thersites’ criticism of Agamemnon).

As we have already seen above, prowess is not given particular weight in the *Book of Songs*. It is "civilian" and "cultural virtues", like mildness, composure, conscientiousness, filial piety, serenity, modesty, etc. that gain a ruler "good fame and reputation" (Zhou 420-4). But something else is more important. While the idea that glory procures immortality for man is central for the Homeric heroes, this idea is absent from the *Book of Songs*. Instead, all three passages that talk about "good fame" talk also about, so to speak, the educational effect connected with it (Zhou 421-4). Enjoying "good fame" implies serving as a model and exercising a positive influence on the surrounding world, be it "all the people" (Mao 235 "Wenwang", Zhou 414-6), the "vassal states" (Mao 262 "Jiang Han", Zhou 422-3) or "all four quarters" (Mao 252 "Quan e", Zhou 423). The problem of human mortality that is so inextricably connected with the idea of glory in Homer does not play any role in this context. One reason for this seems to be the particular relations of the individual and the group mentioned above, which is characteristic for the *Book of Songs* and which applies, in particular, to the members of the ruling house (Zhou 422): "Individuals assert their striving for excellence only by presenting it as part of a collective and continuous endeavor, and what they achieve is recognized and praised insofar as it successfully perpetuates the legacy of their predecessors. It is by participating in this vertical continuum that one achieves renown and leaves a mark in history." If the relations between the individual and the group are seen in this way, individual mortality is only of limited significance even for the individual him- or herself. With the Homeric heroes, this is certainly not the case. And this is why glory is so important for them.

If we observe here another difference between Homer and the *Book of Songs*, a surprising and moving convergence deserves at least a short additional comment. It is connected with the turn things take in the last Book of the *Iliad*. As Cairns formulates it, "we see here just how far notions of mutual respect can go in support of universalizable moral values" (Cairns 401). What Cairns discusses in this passage is the fact that, in the final scene of the *Iliad*, Achilles gives up his pursuit of revenge and decides to return Hector's body to his father Priam, who has reminded him of his own father Peleus in order to make him understand his, Priam's, situation. What we would like to add is that the value which Achilles realizes in his meeting with Priam is probably best denoted by a central Confucian term: *ren*, "humaneness". Taken together with the fact that Zeus promises *kudos* ("glory") for Achilles' act of humaneness, this seems to be an impressive symbol of this value's universality.

Possible Topics for Further Comparison

For good reasons, the two authors decided to limit their discussion to a specific, particularly significant set of values. Thus, it will be a task in the future to extend the discussions to other such sets. Some immediately suggest themselves. A study of "religious" values for example, i.e. of values the texts convey concerning the relation between man and the divine powers, would probably lead to interesting results. Piety appears as an important value both in the Homeric epics and the *Book of Songs*. But what concrete forms does it take, how do the human agents concretely orientate their conduct in the Chinese and in the Greek cases? Similarly, it seems promising to explore the value theme with respect to the relations between man and nature. Here, the Shankman and Durrant opposition of participation vs. intentionality could be discussed and tested.[13] A particular challenge would consist in the need to work to a larger extent with indirect modes of statement, such as similes or *xing*. Finally, a third subject area suited to a comparative analysis is addressed in the last section of Zhou's paper: love (Zhou 432-7). Many poems of the *Book of Songs*, in particular of its first part, "Airs", deal with love between men and women of different walks of life, and in the Homeric poems figures such as Helen, Andromache, and Penelope and their fates receive close attention. It is certainly the case that, concerning the *Book of Songs*, analysis would be fraught with particular difficulties, as Zhou points out: the commentarial tradition from early on interprets poems that to us seem to express the natural sentiments of lovers as conveying educational messages that, in one way or other, are in accordance with Confucian ethics. On the other hand, comparison with the ideas and ideals of the Homeric epics could sharpen the contours of both the original orientation of the poems and their orientation according to Confucianist interpretations.

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[13] See Shankman and Durrant 2000.

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LOOKING BACKWARD AND FORWARD

Fritz-Heiner MUTSCHLER

It is time to look back at what has been achieved and to look ahead at what could be done next. The retrospective view will be limited to recalling a few major points, the prospective, to briefly outlining some possible avenues of future research.

It was the aim of this collection of essays to launch a systematic comparison of Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* with the Chinese *Book of Songs*. The approach chosen was to treat a selection of pertinent topics by juxtaposing in each case a paper on Homer and a paper on the *Shijing*, followed by a comparative commentary.

The papers of Part I were devoted to the coming into being and the reception of the two text corpora. They brought out a series of essential commonalities between the Homeric epics and the *Shijing* and confirmed that these poems can be considered "cultural texts" or "foundational texts" in the sense adumbrated in the introduction.[1] Both corpora reached this singular position through a complex process whose different strands and stages are almost impossible to disentangle. Some points seem, nevertheless, to be clear. Thus, the process was in both cases very long, with the beginnings reaching back into periods about which we have only scarce knowledge, and the final fixation of the texts dating possibly later than tradition has it.[2] In both cases, moreover, this process most probably included the transition from orality to writing. That the Homeric epics in some way or other hark back to orally performed poems is nowadays accepted among Homerists,[3] just as it is clear to *Shijing* scholars that the oral tradition must have played an important role in the coming into being and transmission of the poems.[4] No less importantly, there can be no doubt that oral performance remained for quite some time the decisive form of textual realization, even after the poems had begun to be transmitted in writing. This holds true for the performance of the Homeric epics at communal festivals or private banquets[5] as well as for the performance of *Shijing* poems at state rituals, diplomatic meetings or elite entertainment.[6] A further commonality consists in the fact that, being performed in different places and on different occasions, already at this stage the *Iliad*, the *Odyssey*, and the poems of the *Shijing* took on trans-regional significance.[7] With the circulation of the poems in writing, this development gained further momentum. The Homeric epics and the *Book of Songs* became reference texts for intellectual discussion and poetic creation.[8] They gave stimulus to poetological thought.[9] And from a certain point, they began to play the role of "primers", so to speak, in education and became the object of professional explanation and commentary.[10] In this context, their origins and transmission underwent historicizing or mythologizing reconstructions. In the case of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, these focused on the figure of the poet Homer, for whom a colorful biographical tradition developed,[11] and later, on the Athenian tyrant Pisistratus as the instigator of a philological constitution of the (previously scattered) Homeric text.[12] In the case of the *Shijing*, the reconstruction focused on Confucius as the selector and guarantor of the "Collection of Three Hundred"[13] and on the scholars – and the walls of Confucius' house – that were said to have preserved the ancient texts in the face of the burning of the books by the First Emperor.[14] The canonization process that was mirrored in these stories reached, finally, a kind of completion when the philological maintenance of the text corpora became state-sponsored enterprises in the royal libraries in Alexandria and Pergamum[15] and in the chairs for *Odes* scholarship established by the Han emperors.[16]

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[1] Introduction 4.

[2] Beecroft 73.

[3] Finkelberg 20-3, Graziosi 88f., Most 168f.

[4] Kern 45-59, Beecroft 76f.

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[5] Graziosi 88-91, Most 168f., 172f.

[6] Kern 45f., 50, 55, 62-4; Schaberg 187-90.

[7] Homer: Graziosi 88, Most 172-5; *Shijing*: Schaberg 189.

[8] Homer: Graziosi 88-102, Most 175-82; *Shijing*: Mittag 117-32, Schaberg 195-202.

[9] Homer: Graziosi 100-2, Most 166f.; *Shijing*: Mittag 123-36, Schaberg 202-5; both: Zhang Wei 291-5.

[10] Homer: Most 181f.; *Shijing*: Schaberg 192-202.

[11] Graziosi 88f., Most 166f.

[12] Finkelberg 15f., Graziosi 89f., 111f.

[13] Kern 39-44, Mittag 120-2.

[14] Beecroft 78, Gao and Liu 151, note 3.

Against the backdrop of these commonalities, the papers touched also on differences. These cannot and need not be listed here in full. I refer only to three that seem to show a comparable tendency.[17] The first concerns the framework of the oral performance of the poems. The *Hymns* and part of the *Greater Odes* of the *Shijing* were created for and performed at state occasions, i.e. ritual ceremonies that were crucial for ensuring the well-being of the community, and within which the performance of the pieces with their specific contents was of decisive importance.[18] The second kind of occasion for performing (any type of) *Shijing* poems – if we can trust the *Zuozhuan* – was the diplomatic meeting at which the recitation of poems, or the citation of parts of poems, was supposed to convey specific political messages.[19] In the case of the Homeric epics, the connection with the political sphere was less immediate and less content-related. The poems were recited at festivals of the Greek communities, i.e. here too the performances had a socio-political function.[20] But though these festivals were in principle religious in character, the purpose of the recitals was mainly cultural entertainment, and the connection of the contents of the poems with the occasion was loose.[21] This different degree of closeness to the political sphere is also visible if one looks at the pre- and proto-philological reception of the poems. In Greece, the Homeric epics served as reference texts for discussions among intellectuals who were active in different fields, be it philosophy, geography, history, or, of course, poetic entertainment (Xenophanes, Heraclitus, Hecataeus, Herodotus, the rhapsodes).[22] In China, the poems of the *Shijing* served as reference texts at diplomatic meetings and were discussed in a scholarly way by men who were, or had been, or wished to be counselors or ministers of rulers and whose thinking was very much oriented toward the state (Confucius, Mencius, Xunzi).[23] Finally, a comparable difference can be seen if one looks at the state-sponsored scholarship under the Han emperors and the Hellenistic kings. For the latter, the establishment of the great libraries and the support of philological scholarship was a matter of prestige but did not entail influence on the actual scholarly work.[24] The establishment of the chairs for *Odes* scholarship by the Han emperors, on the other hand, was politically motivated and characterized by ideological expectations concerning the scholars' interpretative efforts.[25] The fact that the *Shijing* soon became part of the Five (or Six) Classics[26] that later served for more than two thousand years as the textual basis for the imperial examinations, whereas Homer and the other literary classics in the West never fulfilled this kind of formal function, lies outside the chronological framework of this volume, but is worth mentioning as it further underlines the general tendency.

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[15] Graziosi 102-11, Most 168.

[16] Kern 39, Mittag 117, 136f. On both Homer and *Shijing*: Gao and Liu 151f.

[17] On what follows, cf. Gao and Liu 153-6.

[18] Kern 45-59, Zhou 412-23.

[19] Kern 62-7, Schaberg 186-95.

[20] Graziosi 88f., Most 172f.

[21] Graziosi 91, 95, Most 174f.

[22] Graziosi 91-102.

The papers of Part II were concerned with the texts as poetic creations. Here, too, commonalities and differences came to the fore. The first important parallel to be mentioned was the simple fact that in both cases the texts are indeed *poetic* texts: composed in verse, distinguished by specific phonetic and musical qualities, formulated in an elevated and artificial language of trans-regional character, adorned with multiple figures of speech and thought, i.e. texts that through their formal features alone are able to grasp the attention of the recipients and to have an effect on their emotions.[27] In addition, in their final form, the texts evoke a sense of unity and wholeness, albeit of a different kind in each case.[28] As for content, the Homeric epics and the *Book of Songs* offer their recipients comprehensive and suggestive depictions of life and the world, presenting men and women as they act and suffer, love and hate, live and die.[29] This implies in both cases the delineation of divine powers exercising their direct or indirect influence on the human sphere,[30] and it also implies – though less in Homer than in the *Shijing* – the delineation of nature.[31] Furthermore, both sets of texts confront their recipients with questions of responsibility and guilt, of conduct and consequences, and in this way convey values and serve as stimuli for moral orientation.

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[23] Mittag 120-30.

[24] As described by Graziosi 102-11.

[25] See e.g. the section "The Classics as State-Sponsored Ideology" in Nylan 2001, 31-41.

[26] Together with the *Documents*, the *Changes*, the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, the *Rites* and possibly the *Classic of Music* (before it was lost). See Nylan 2001.

[27] Homer: Mutschler and Schmidt 230-40; *Shijing*: Chen and Williams 257-70; both: Zhang Wei 285-8.

[28] Homer: Mutschler and Schmidt 240-7; *Shijing*: Chen and Williams 270-81; both: Zhang Wei 288-91.

Concerning the differences, I again limit myself to highlighting a few points. Already on the level of poetic form, the contrast between long narratives continuing for thousands of lines in a steady and stately meter, the hexameter, and a collection of poems of limited length consisting of varying numbers of stanzas of varying length and varying rhyme patterns is blatant. The difference in external form can be seen as closely connected to the difference in internal structure: on the one hand, two large poetic unities, each with one hero and one unified action;[32] on the other hand, the much looser unity of a multitude of poems ordered according to regional and/or social origin, and other partly less clear principles, and exhibiting a relatively loose and shifting "thematic coherence".[33] The emotional effect can be assumed as differing correspondingly. In the Greek case, the unity of action overwhelms the recipient by its dramatic momentum; in the Chinese case, a vaguer and, as one of the papers has it, "musical" sense of unity involves the recipient in emotional situations that vary from, but simultaneously complement, each other.[34]

Just as the form and structure of the Homeric poems and the *Shijng* showed differences, so did the contents of the texts. To recap my earlier summary:[35] The Homeric epics are first of all concerned with the extraordinary, be it an outstanding war, vicious fighting, or exotic and unheard-of adventures.[36] The "normal" life of a peaceful peasant community directed by its *basileus* comes into view only in passing (on the shield of Achilles, or as the vaguely imagined future of Odysseus) and seems meant primarily to provide contrast and background to the extraordinary.[37] In the *Book of Songs*, it is the other way around. As could be seen, there are poems that deal with extraordinary situations and outstanding achievements,[38] but the majority of poems are about the affairs and problems of day-to-day life, be it farming and ritual performances, toiling and feasting, the hardships of military service, the joys and pains of love, etc.[39] While the Homeric epics concentrate on the outstanding and exceptional, the *Shijing* is interested in both the extraordinary and the ordinary alike.

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[29] See the papers of section II B.

[30] Homer: Andersen 321-6; *Shijing*: Li 336-47; both: Mutschler 367-70.

[31] *Shijing*: Li 330-6; both: Mutschler 371f.

[32] Mutschler and Schmidt 242-7.

[33] Chen and Williams 270-81.

[34] Zhang Wei 285-8.

[35] Mutschler 361.

[36] Andersen 302-4, 314f.

This difference appears concretized in the characters of the poems. The Homeric epics focus on a limited number of outstanding individuals,[40] whereas the *Book of Songs* presents a multitude of people, what they do and feel and how they fare.[41] In social terms, this is to say that the *Book of Songs* gives more room than the Homeric epics to people other than noble leaders, that it takes into regard all layers of society, including commoners with their thoughts and feelings.[42] Correspondingly, the anthropomorphic Homeric gods seem first of all interested in the heroic individuals, to most of whom they are related through blood or emotional ties,[43] while the more abstract deities of the *Book of Songs* – Heaven, the Lord on High, the deified ancestors – are more concerned with the fate of the community and its representatives.[44]

This brings to mind the ideals of rulership evoked in the texts. It could be observed that the exemplary rulers of the *Shijing* are characterized by a degree of unselfishness that the Homeric *basilêes* lack, whereas the prowess and warrior qualities that all Homeric leaders show remain marginal for the Zhou kings.[45] The Homeric heroes fight in the forefront, they are persistent and resourceful in danger and adversity, and for this they are rewarded with honor and glory.[46] The good kings of the *Book of Songs* are responsible rulers who are outstanding in their ability to secure the safety of the realm and the well-being of their subjects, and for this they achieve good fame.[47] Not unrelated to this seem the different functions of "glory" and "good fame". The Homeric heroes consider glory as a value in itself because for them it is "the only form of immortality accessible to man".[48] In the *Shijing*, "good fame" appears less important for its own sake – the idea of individual immortality is nowhere in the foreground – than for its, so to speak, educational effect: "Enjoying 'good fame' implies always serving as a model and exercising a positive influence on the surrounding world."[49]

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[37] Andersen 304-7.

[38] Li 336-41, Zhou 412-23.

[39] Li 329-58 passim.

[40] Mutschler and Schmidt 342-7, Andersen 307-11, 316-20.

[41] Chen and Williams 272-4, Li 329-58 passim.

[42] Mutschler 363f. Also relevant here is the observation that in the *Shijing* the voice of women is as much heard as the voice of men, while in the Homeric epics the male perspective, taken all in all, remains dominant (Mutschler 364f.).

[43] Andersen 323-6.

[44] Li 336-44, Zhou 412-20.

[45] Huang and Yan 444f.

In order not to be too repetitive I will stop looking backward now. In spite of its sparseness and subjectivity, this overview should have indicated that the foregoing papers, besides confirming the status of the Homeric epics and the *Shijing* as "foundational texts", have also contributed to a clearer and more nuanced perception of the two text corpora, of their common human basis, and of their characteristic cultural differences.

On the other hand, it is to no one clearer than to the initiator of this enterprise that what has been achieved is no more than a beginning, and that almost all remains to be done. Three directions of further research suggest themselves.

First, the direct comparison of the two sets of texts should be carried on, starting with a reassessment (i.e. confirmation, refutation, correction, or supplement) of the observations presented in the preceding papers. A few possible continuations have already been pointed out by the commentators.

In his remarks on the papers on the "Cultural Role" of the Homeric epics and the *Shijing*, Zhang Longxi refers twice to the *Chuci*, the *Songs from the South*, as a text corpus that should be taken into account when discussing conceptions of poetry in early China.[50] Glenn Most, in his paper on Homer, has already mentioned the role Hesiod played in Greece as “the other poet”.[51] Thus, it seems worthwhile to look more closely at the relationship of the Homeric epics and the *Book of Songs* to other possibly equally important texts, in order to determine still more precisely their cultural role. In this context, it would be useful to discuss also the fact that the *Book of Songs* became part of the canon of the Five (or Six) Classics relatively early, and from a certain point was mainly studied in this framework, while the Homeric epics were never part of such a closed set of scriptures but only of relatively loose literary canons, which did not prevent them from being mostly received independently. What does this difference mean for the ways in which the texts exercised their cultural influence?

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[46] Cairns 395-405.

[47] Zhou 420-3.

[48] Huang and Yan 448.

[49] Huang and Yan 448.

[50] Zhang Longxi 211, 218.

An important possible benefit from the comparative approach is pointed out by Alex Beecroft in his commentary on the papers on “Coming into Being”. The juxtaposition of *Shijing* scholarship and Homeric scholarship can stimulate a useful transfer of questions and speculations concerning the texts on the one side to those on the other.[52] Thus, Beecroft suggests (a) investigating whether the political dynamics of the late Warring State and Western Han eras played a similar role for the shaping of the *Book of Songs* to that which Margalit Finkelberg assumes for the political dynamics of sixth-century Athens in the shaping of the Homeric epics; and (b) examining whether the mediation of our reading of the *Shijing* by the centuries-long commentarial tradition, which is stressed by Martin Kern, has its counterpart in a similar influence of the long tradition of Homeric scholarship on our perception of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.

A striking parallel in the reception of the Homeric epics and the *Book of Songs* is the phenomenon of state-sponsored academic philology at the libraries of Alexandria and Pergamum and at the chairs for *Odes* scholarship established by the Han emperors. In both cases, philological activity resulted in meticulous annotations. The commentators on the papers on “‘Philological’ Reception” reasonably suggest comparing these annotations in detail, i.e. exploring comparatively what purpose they were intended to serve, where their interests lay, what questions they addressed, in what form they presented their answers, etc.[53] Such comparison could help to define more clearly what

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[51] Most 182.

[52] Beecroft 83.

[53] Gao and Liu 156.

"philological" reception meant on both sides, and how it was related to their respective institutional contexts.

The list of topics touched upon in the preceding papers where further investigation seems worthwhile could easily be expanded. Thus, regarding "Form and Structure", a detailed investigation of the poetic language, especially of the figures of speech and of the imagery, could promote our understanding of the formal aspects of the texts and their effect on the recipients. After the general description of the "Contents" of the texts as provided by the papers in question, a more in-depth analysis of the treatment of specific themes, such as "life and death", "love and passion", "human toil and human joy", etc., could enrich the picture. This applies similarly to the field of "Values", where the papers have been prudently limited to the examination of values connected with rulership, and where there is, therefore, room for complementary studies of values concerning other spheres of life, like family, economy, religion, etc. There is no need for further elaboration. That the possibilities of continuing the direct comparison of the two text corpora are as manifold as promising should be apparent.

A second line of research is more far-reaching. In order to embed the Homer-*Shijing* comparison within a wider context, it makes sense to ask whether observations presented in the preceding papers can be related to results of Sino-Hellenic studies in fields outside poetry, such as prose literature, philosophy, science, and the like.[54] Two such possibilities have already been indicated.

Zhang Wei directed his commentary on the papers on "Form and Structure" toward the "philosophical poetics" developing in Greece and China and culminating in Aristotle's *Poetics* and the *Great Preface* of the Mao recension. He showed how these poetics not only explicated the poetic thought inherent in the texts, but also influenced their subsequent reception.[55] His suggestion to follow up on these interrelations[56] deserves attention since such investigation may enable us to deepen our understanding of the processes that lead from the two text corpora to two distinct theories of poetry, and in the end to two distinct traditions of aesthetics.

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[54] For a brief overview of such studies, see Introduction 1f.

[55] Zhang Wei 291-5.

[56] Zhang Wei 295.

I myself suggested, in my commentary on the “Contents” papers, an expansion of the investigation to include historiography.[57] Reflecting on a possible correlation between structure and contents, both in the Homeric epics and the *Book of Songs*, I pointed to the phenomenon that in both traditions a similar correlation can be observed in the “classics” of historiography. Like the *Shijing,* Sima Qian’s *Shiji* and the dynastic histories in its succession are divided into several independent parts that are subdivided into autonomous chapters. On the other hand, like the Homeric epics, Herodotus’ and Thucydides’ histories, and most other Greco-Roman historical works, present continuous narratives unfolding in a unified movement from a beginning to an end. At the same time, as far as content is concerned, like the Homeric epics, Greco-Roman histories document a preponderant interest in politics, with war as its decisive means, while, like the *Shijing*, Chinese historical works are characterized by a more comprehensive approach that includes a genuine interest in the peaceful side of history, and in non-military and even non-political human activities. It seems that these parallels deserve further thought.[58]

Another literary genre that can possibly be related with profit to our foundational texts is rhetoric. Some years ago, Lu Xing presented a study of Chinese rhetoric from the fifth to the third century BCE, in which she undertook, inter alia, a comparison of her subject with its classical Greek counterpart.[59] For understandable reasons, this part of her work has not found much favor with reviewers.[60] But this should not keep others from following in her footsteps. Thus, Lu’s indication that both in China and in Greece rhetoric had one of its roots in early poetry, i.e. in the *Shijing* and the Homeric epics respectively, is not unfounded given the wealth of figures of speech we find in the poems of the Chinese anthology and the high percentage of direct speech that characterizes the Homeric narratives. This suggests the question whether the characteristics that can be worked out for Chinese and Greek rhetoric of the fifth to the third century are in any way foreshadowed in the “rhetoric” of the foundational texts, a question that is not without interest for the assessment of the latter’s cultural significance.

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[57] Mutschler 366f.

[58] For first reflections, see Mutschler 1997.

[59] Lu 1998.

[60] See e.g. Wardy 1999.

The most ambitious Sino-Hellenic projects do not concern particular literary genres but broader intellectual fields. On the one hand, there are the studies on ancient Chinese and Greek philosophy, e.g. the "trilogy" by David Hall and Roger T. Ames,[61] and, on the other hand, there is Geoffrey Lloyd's project – inspired by Joseph Needham and partly conducted with others – of comparing the development of science in ancient China and Greece.[62] Though there are more points of contact between results of these studies and observations presented in this volume, I will draw attention to only two, one concerning the socio-political framework, the other concerning fundamental structures of thought.

The point that Lloyd stresses perhaps most consistently in his contributions is the importance of the socio-political framework for any kind of intellectual activity. In his opinion, this framework was different in China and Greece, and this difference was the main reason for the different development science (and philosophy) took in each case. Apart from the form of the state and of the juridical system, Lloyd takes into account the relation of the intellectuals to political power. While the Greek intellectuals of the archaic and classical periods had no official employment in sight, the Chinese scholars were often close to the centers of political power and frequently played the role of advisers to the government. For the former, this entailed greater freedom of intellectual speculation; for the latter, it meant a certain amount of influence but also the necessity of ideological circumspection.[63] These findings parallel what was said above about the "philological" reception of the Homeric epics and the *Shijing*. The intellectuals involved in the transmission and interpretation of the *Book of Songs* too were nearer to the state than their Greek counterparts, and once again this difference seems to have had an effect on scholarship.[64] The question to be pursued is whether this parallel is coincidental or of more general significance. In other words, are the persons involved in the different intellectual activities connected (or even partly identical) with each other, or is each group independently active in its respective field. Do these fields intercommunicate and influence each other or not, and if they do, in what way?

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[61] Hall and Ames 1987, 1995, 1998. For other authors and works, see Introduction 2, note 4.

[62] See Lloyd 1990, 1996; Lloyd and Sivin 2002; and the works listed above Introduction 2, note 5.

[63] See Lloyd and Sivin 2002, 241ff.

[64] See Gao and Liu 153-6. See also above 452-4.

As to the second point, the opposition between "causal" and "correlative" thinking has been for a long time a recurring idea in the comparative study of Greek and Chinese thinking. Marcel Granet,[65] Angus C. Graham,[66] and in particular Hall and Ames,[67] worked with these notions. And even Lloyd and Sivin, though advising against the assumption of a "polar contrast", nevertheless, see here a characteristic difference.[68] In view of the fact that the studies in question treat almost exclusively texts from the fifth century BCE onward, it is worth noting that the Homeric epics and the *Book of Songs* can be said to display a similar opposition already. In the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, although the similes make use of correspondences between different spheres of life and, in this sense, demonstrate an associative or "correlative" way of thinking, the main narratives unfold in unified plots in which questions of causation and responsibility play a decisive role, not least for the recipients' evaluation of the agents involved and their actions. In the *Shijing*, in contrast, though there are poems that address the connection between deeds and consequences, causal analysis is not in the foreground. Instead, we have a multitude of poems that present a multitude of situations, and the collection receives its structure not through the presentation of causal developments but through the juxtaposition of poems that are related to each other by genre, geographical origin, theme, chronology, etc. That is to say, the collection as a whole presents the world in a kind of ordered manifoldness within which the parts, i.e. the poems, are correlated with each other in a shifting plurality of respects. These are, of course, only preliminary observations. But they seem worth following up.

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[65] Granet 1934.

[66] Graham 1986.

[67] See note 61.

[68] See Lloyd and Sivin 158f.: "On both sides the contrast would be flawed. The Greeks had a developed interest in correlations. … The Chinese investigated causes in a variety of contexts … Except for some elliptical remarks in the *Mohist canons*, however, the extant Chinese texts from the Warring and Han periods do not contain explicit analyses of causes. The Greek preoccupation with causal accounts, and with the nature of causes itself is, by contrast, intense." Equally intense is the Chinese interest in correspondences, e.g. those between cosmos, state, and body, dealt with in detail by Lloyd and Sivin later on (214-26).

Finally, we should remind ourselves that in some of the works that compare Greek and Chinese patterns of thinking and feeling we find already chapters that use the Homeric epics and the *Book of Songs* as "source material" to illustrate their theses. Lisa Raphals' ideas about "cunning" as a common concept of Greek and Chinese thinking,[69] Jullien's antithesis of "access" and "detour",[70] and Shankman and Durrant's opposition of "intentionalism" and "participation"[71] all deserve and require further examination that could profit from the systematic comparison of the two sets of texts undertaken in this volume.

I come to the third possible line of future research.[72] This leads into the field of the comparative investigation of canons, cultural texts, and foundational texts in ancient civilizations in general, which has seen an impressive development in the last decades. Two objects of analysis can be distinguished: the mechanisms and processes of canon-formation, and the character of the texts themselves. If one looks at existing studies, the preponderance of interest has been in the first topic, whereas the second has often remained in the background. An expansion of the studies in this volume is imaginable with respect to both.

A pertinent collection of essays was published a decade ago by Margalit Finkelberg and Guy G. Stroumsa.[73] It is truly intercultural insofar as it deals not only with Greek, Hebrew, Mesopotamian, Persian, and Roman texts but also, in an enlightening "Afterword" by Andrew Plaks, with the Chinese Classics.[74] Plaks first "observes a number of distinct points of resonance in the separate stories" told "about the processes of canon-formation and its cultural significance".[75] They concern the "interrelation between oral and written modes of textuality", – with a "'primary' stage of canonization" of "predominantly oral character", a process of "ongoing transition from oral fluidity to written fixity", and the eventual "conferring of 'secondary' canonic status" by "political and cultural authorities" – "the central role of learned transmission at the core of the phenomenon of canon-making", and the phenomenon of "canon as both a matrix and a catalyst for forging ethnic and cultural identity".[76] In a second step, Plaks outlines how "the early Chinese experience of canon-making corroborates the common underpinnings even while underlining certain unique aspects of Far Eastern literary civilization".[77] The papers of the present volume undoubtedly tie in partly with these observations. By bringing in their results more completely it would be possible to substantiate the idea of basic commonalities between the cultures discussed in order to detail further the description of the essential steps of the canonization process, and, at the same time, to contribute to the necessary differentiation between the specifics of each case.

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[69] Raphals 1992.
[70] Jullien 1995.
[71] Shankman and Durrant 2000.
[72] Indicated already by Beecroft 73f.
[73] Finkelberg and Stroumsa 2003.
[74] Plaks 2003.
[75] Plaks 2003, 269.

Yet the expansion of the investigations of this volume to the foundational texts of cultures other than those of ancient Greece and early China is also imaginable with respect to the analysis of the texts as texts. Thus, it could be instructive to take the three topics of the second half of this volume and to look comparatively at the literary form of those texts, at their content, and at the values they convey. Very probably it would turn out that with regard to each of these aspects some of the texts are closer to one another than to others, and it might even be possible to develop certain text typologies. Then, of course, the question would arise whether, to what extent, and in what way contents, form, and values are dependent on each other, both in the individual texts and, possibly, in the different types of texts.

There are, obviously, many more questions that could guide an intercultural comparison of foundational texts. But suffice it to say that, whatever concrete questions one may or may not think of, it seems clear that here, too, another promising field of research is lying in front of us.

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[76] Plaks 2003, 269-271.

[77] Plaks 2003, 272. For a preliminary description, see 272-6.

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